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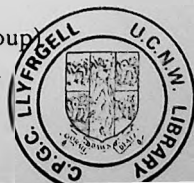
Political Education in Britain

Edited by
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General Editor's Preface

Political education is, as it should be and in the best sense, controversial. It takes as its subject matter how and for what reasons a society's 'goods' are distributed. It examines how decisions are made about the distribution of health, welfare, education and income and the processes through which they are carried out. More trenchantly it may examine the nature of bias in government and the distortion of morality that the assumption of political power may cause. These are not issues on which any final analysis may be made. Their understanding calls for judgment; even wisdom. It is to create the basis for such judgment and the beginnings of such wisdom that is the end of political education.

This reader, ably edited by Clive Harber, provides a broad appreciation of where political education is at; a *state of the art* account across age ranges and issues; from primary school to university. In providing such a conspectus, *Political Education in Britain* amply demonstrates that there is much energy, drive and commitment available to the teaching of political education at all levels. Surely the best safeguard a democracy can have.

Philip H Taylor
University of Birmingham, 1987

Editor's Preface

In Britain 'politics' is often thought of as a rather unsavoury activity conducted only by adults in the privacy of their polling booths and for which citizens need little preparation or training. Yet, paradoxically, as a booklet recently published jointly by the Politics Association and the Political Studies Association stated: 'Politics can be studied with benefit at almost every stage of an education' (*Studying Politics: Its Relevance and Uses*). The present book verifies this giving a comprehensive account of the state of the art of the 'art of the state' in British education at all levels from the primary school to undergraduate degree. In so doing this collection of essays also provides an important reminder of the significant role of political education in a democratic society.

Clive Harber
University of Birmingham, 1987

Introduction

Clive Harber

In Britain 'politics' and 'education' have traditionally been viewed as two distinct and separate realms. While this was always an intellectually untenable position, the interrelationship between politics and education has become clearer and more obvious over the last two decades. In the political realm politicians have regularly intervened in education and education has become a major issue of political controversy. The introduction of comprehensivization, the attempt to link schools more closely with industry and the role of the Manpower Services Commission, the intention to introduce a national curriculum, the assisted places scheme and cutbacks in higher education are all examples. In the educational realm research on political socialization showed that young people developed political values and attitudes at a much earlier age than had previously been thought, before corresponding political knowledge, and that the school was a major agency in the transmission of political values (Dawson, Prewitt and Dawson, 1977; Stacey, 1978). Political scientists and sociologists, Marxist and non-Marxist alike, have, for example, noted the similarity between the authoritarian, bureaucratic power relations of state schools and those prevalent in the types of low status job in a large organization that most pupils from these schools would traditionally have gone on to fill. Conversely, in private schooling the ethos of leadership training is later reflected in the composition of economic and political elites (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Dreeben, 1968; Shipman, 1971). Furthermore, work on the nature of school subjects has increasingly called into question their 'neutrality' — all school subjects have a political dimension and involve political issues from time to time (Harber, 1986). In particular much recent attention has been given to the role of schools in the

perpetuation of racism and sexism and the ensuing lack of power in society of both blacks and women.

The traditional British distinction between politics and education also meant that, while the general population were quietly socialized into their future political roles through the hidden curriculum, the question of an overt and explicit political education designed to create an informed citizenry that was able to participate in the political process was seldom addressed. When it was, as with the Association for Education in Citizenship in the 1930s (Whitmarsh, 1981), it failed to have much impact. The absence of revolution, defeat in war or colonization and independence has also meant that, unlike most other countries, Britain has not been forced to confront the issue of preparing its citizens for a new political system.

This situation began to change, however, at the end of the 1960s. In 1969, at a time when the voting age was being lowered to eighteen and an increasing amount of people who had studied some politics in higher education were entering teaching and lecturing, Derek Heater edited a book entitled *The Teaching of Politics* (Heater, 1969a). The remainder of this introduction will review developments in political education since that time in the light both of the contributions to Heater's book and those in the present volume.

In the introduction to his book Heater comments in regard to political education that '... since the 1950s no real lead has been given either by the Ministry or by any private associations' (p. ix), though he noted that a conference had been arranged in order to set up a national association for teachers of political studies in secondary schools and in higher education. The Politics Association was established in 1969 and immediately began to press the case, developed by Bernard Crick (1969) in the Heater collection, for a change away from 'British Constitution' at 'A' level to an approach based on political science as it had been developing in higher education. As Eric Magee describes in this volume, this involved a move away from an emphasis on the institutions of central government to an approach emphasizing actual political behaviour and including informal and non-governmental political organizations such as pressure groups, the mass media, political parties etc. Indeed, the syllabuses discussed by Magee demonstrate the considerable success of the Politics Association in influencing the content of 'A' level syllabuses.

In 1974 the Politics Association was influential in establishing

the Programme for Political Education, a research programme which set out to develop possible aims and objectives for political education, particularly at the level of secondary school and college of further education. As I discuss in the chapter on the 14–16 age range, the PPE recommended a move away from concentrating solely on the type of political knowledge to be studied and argued that political skills and procedural values are equally important aims of political education. This research, the resulting publications and coverage in the education press all helped to bring political education into the arena of public debate and in so doing began a process of legitimization that has continued for over a decade.

A second factor that increased public debate about political education concerned Bernard Crick's warning in Heater's book to the effect that the '... younger generation is becoming actively alienated or sullenly indifferent to our political institutions' (Crick, 1969, p. 19). By the late 1970s this increasingly seemed to many an accurate portrayal of the situation. Stradling's survey (1977) demonstrated widespread political ignorance among school leavers while violent street clashes between supporters of the National Front and the Anti-Nazi League suggested that young people may be slipping away from 'mainstream' politics. This public concern was reflected in increased official interest. The book that contained the working papers of the PPE, for example, (Crick and Porter, 1978), also contained a paper by two members of HMI on political competency education which strongly supported the notion of political education for political literacy. Moreover, in 1977 the HMI in *Curriculum 11–16* had identified the 'social and political' as one of the eight equal areas of experience for all pupils. The importance of political education has been reiterated in a number of DES and HMI documents since then (Porter, 1983, p. 19).

Thus, whereas in 1969 Gardener was able to write in his contribution to Heater's book that 'The most frequent response ... to the question "what does your school do in political education?" is "Nothing at all"' (p. 40), the contributors to the present book make it clear that this is certainly no longer the case. However, as they also make clear, there are still many problems and issues surrounding the nature and extent of political education.

One question that both Bernard Crick and Harold Entwistle agreed on in their essays in Heater's volume, for example, was that political education should begin at the secondary school level and that it was unsuitable for primary schools. This assertion is strongly challenged in the present volume by Alistair Ross who provides

evidence of children's political learning below the age of 11 and who discusses how political education can be introduced into the primary school curriculum.

Another issue is the question of what should be taught and learned. The emphasis in the 1969 collection (for example in Thompson's chapter on 'The teaching of Civics and British Constitution') is very much on the formal transmission of political knowledge and understanding rather than the development of political skills and procedural values required by the PPE. That 'A' levels still very much remain in the former mould is argued by Magee. At the 14–16 level the influence of public examinations has also limited the impact of the PPE though, as I note in my chapter on this age group, a small step forward has been taken with the arrival of the GCSE. Given the difficulties and constraints created by the need to follow an examination syllabus, perhaps a more promising context for the development of a broader political education is the informal sector of youth work. However, as Mark Smith describes in this volume, while there are opportunities there are problems of provision in this sector as well. Moreover, the voluntary nature, and hence restricted access, of youth work to young people means that, despite the valuable work done, its role will mainly be to reinforce, supplement and inform the political education of all young people that ought to be happening in British schools and colleges.

One reason why the spread of political education has been uneven is the continuing problem raised in the 1969 collection — fear of bias. For those actually involved in political education this is a somewhat spurious problem as controversial values affect all areas of the curriculum and there are various strategies for dealing with them in the classroom (Stradling, Noctor and Baines, 1984). Indeed, a major aim of political education is the ability to detect political values in newspapers, television, textbooks etc. However, accusations of (left-wing) political bias continue especially in regard to some of the new developments related to political education that are discussed by Ian Lister in the present volume — in particular peace education. These attacks come from right-wing writers (Scruton, Ellis-Jones and O'Keeffe, 1985; O'Keeffe, 1986) and though they are unsubstantiated and easy to rebuff (Harber and Brown, 1986) they demonstrate both a recognition and a fear of the growth of political education. This, as I have argued elsewhere (Harber, 1984), is because schools have traditionally emphasized centre-right political values rather than centre-left ones and thus open, balanced dis-

cussion of politics is perceived as a threat by those who see the educational status quo as operating to their advantage.

The need to avoid ethnocentricity and include an international dimension in political education was stressed in a number of the chapters in Heater's *The Teaching of Politics*. The chapter on 'The teaching of world affairs' by James Henderson, for example, mentions global interdependence, human rights, racial discrimination and the need to consider developments in the 'Third World'. Michael Clarke in the present collection discusses how the study of international relations in higher education is approaching these and related issues and in so doing providing much food for thought both for those studying at this level and for those developing an international perspective in schools and colleges. The second of these levels is discussed by Ian Lister who shows how the international dimension of political education has progressed in the 1970s and 1980s and how it has created its own debates and controversies. In one of these areas, multicultural and anti-racist education, political education has received firm support from the authoritative Swann Report (DES, 1985):

If youngsters are led to reflect critically on the political framework of life in this country, this should involve a consideration of how particular structures and procedures have evolved and their appropriateness to today's multiracial population. Learning how some long-established practices were originally developed to cater for a relatively homogeneous population should lead youngsters by extension to consider whether such practices are still appropriate to the changed and changing nature of British society today. It should also lead them to consider whether some can now be seen to operate against the interests of certain sections of the community, especially the numerically smaller ethnic minority groups, by depriving them of equality of access to the full range of opportunities open to the majority community. In thus learning how racism can operate, youngsters from both minority and majority communities may be better able to understand and challenge its influence and to consider positive and constructive changes to reflect the values of a pluralist democracy. This process should not be seen as in any sense posing a threat to democratic principles but rather as a reaffirmation of these principles in response to changing

circumstances. Effective political education should also lead youngsters to consider fundamental issues such as social justice and equality and this should in turn cause them to reflect on the origins and mechanism of racism and prejudice at an individual level. (paragraph 3.9)

Nevertheless, despite the greatly increased interest in global and multicultural educational perspectives a note of caution is required as to the extent of actual classroom penetration so far. Certainly the chapters in the present collection on the 14–18 age range indicate that at examination level at least its impact is limited. However, these are recent developments and, as Ian Lister suggests, may well point the way forward rather than describe what presently happens.

Much has also changed since John Roberts wrote his chapter on the role of the technical college in political education (Roberts, 1969). His statement that ‘... every student must be treated as a potential citizen and a human being as well as a worker and unit of production’ is not easily reconciled with Robert Shemilt’s account of the MSC’s attempt to remove political education from Youth Training Schemes. Yet, as Shemilt in relation to the Certificate of Pre-vocational Education (CPVE) for the 16–19 age group and Lynton Robins in relation to the Higher National Diploma (HND) in higher education both argue, vocational education can provide a valuable context for the development of political *skills* as well as knowledge.

Another question that must be asked concerns the training received by the students who will go on to teach political education. In terms first of the nature and extent of the politics now being taught in higher education, as opposed to teacher training for political education, there is both good news and bad news. John Dearlove, in his chapter in the present volume, describes the rapid growth in teaching and research in politics in higher education in the twentieth century but also the recent decline in the light of government cuts. He also discusses, as does Michael Clarke in his chapter on international relations, new developments in what is perceived to be the content of politics to be studied and the analytical framework used to study politics. However, whereas the study of politics in higher education will provide future teachers with important knowledge and conceptual understanding, the traditional reliance on authoritarian and didactic teaching styles in formal lectures and seminars will do little, as Alex Porter suggests in his chapter on teacher training, to prepare teachers for the wider range of teaching methods

required to foster political skills and procedural values. Unfortunately, as Alex Porter also describes, although the amount of teacher training for political education has increased a little since Heater's survey found none at all (1969b), the question of learning method on in-service and pre-service teacher training courses has only just begun to be addressed.

The lack of congruence between the democratic skills and values that are key aims of political education and the learning experience of students both in teacher training and on degree level politics courses also raises a final and crucial issue, that of the lack of democracy in educational institutions in general. In 1969 Entwistle in the Heater collection described schools as being '... nearer a totalitarian than a democratic model' (p. 188) and in this regard little seems to have changed. Charles Handy, visiting professor at the London Business School, a former oil company executive and author of a standard textbook on organizations, studied eight schools handing out a questionnaire used in studies of business organization. One conclusion that he came up with was that schools closely resemble prisons and concentration camps in their organizational style in that the inmates' work routine is disrupted every forty minutes; they change their places of work and supervisors constantly; they have no place they can call their own and they are often forbidden to communicate and cooperate with each other (*Sunday Times*, 5 February 1984). It is to the issue of the power structure and political values of the classroom and institutional environment as much as to what is taught that political educators at all levels should turn their attention in the future.

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Political Education in the Primary School

Alistair Ross

Introduction

One of the *principal* functions of education is to prepare pupils and students for the *active* discharge of the responsibility of citizenship.... Schools and colleges should be ready, in the interests of good education, to tackle issues that are politically controversial. (DES, 1986, my emphasis)

Political education, important if pupils are to understand the forces, issues and processes at work in society, may be dealt with not only through such subjects as history, geography and social studies, but also through science, CDT, business studies and literature as well as through aspects of school life which exemplify the workings of society at large. (DES, 1985, para 27)

Faced with statements such as these, most primary teachers initially blanch, and then recover themselves by asserting that such paragraphs must refer to work in secondary schools, for politics is beyond the capabilities of young children. Yet this is clearly not what is expected by the Secretary of State or HMI, who do not qualify their assertions in this way. Nor is it the case in practice, since most 11-year-olds are able to name at least two political parties, can describe, sometimes imperfectly, an election, and are attempting to distinguish between the roles of monarch and premier (Greenstein *et al*, 1969). Particular groups of children may have considerably greater skills and understanding (Ross, 1984).

It is clear that somewhere during the primary years of education children are beginning to acquire an understanding of politics. Most teachers assert that it is not going on in their schools; minis-

ters and inspectors say that it should. The questions this chapter seeks to discuss are where is political learning happening before the age of 11? Could this learning become part of mainstream primary curriculum work? What models are there for such work? These questions will be explored in relation to the recent official pronouncements.

Studies of Political Concept Development

Hess and Torney's (1967) classic study of the 1960s of how children in the USA develop political attitudes concluded that political involvement begins with a strong and positive emotional attachment to their own country and with a faith in political leaders, particularly the President. They suggest that family socialization is less significant than the schools in transmitting attitudes, conceptions and beliefs about the political system. Like many other studies of political socialization at the time, the authors' conception of politics was of a particular form of consensual government. For example, though schools were credited with the major role in political education, they observe — with some criticism — that 'teachers tend not to deal with partisanship or to discuss the role and importance of conflict'. They suggest that 'the unpleasant aspects of political life (corruption) should perhaps be left until a later time [than age 11], when they can be viewed as deviations, rather than being mistaken for normal or usual behaviour'. This contrasts with observations of political learning in some English primary schools.

There are many examples of children's understanding of large concepts. Jahoda's (1959) work on children's perception of social class and social differences pointed to the greater political sophistication and articulation of children from middle class homes than those from working class homes, which might seem to counter Hess and Torney's suggestion that school exerts a greater influence on political socialization than the home. At the age of 7, most middle class children were able to perceive differences in social class, though not to describe it until they were 9; working class children displayed the same level of perception at 9 (the upper age limit of the study). There was, Jahoda concluded, a well-developed but covert concept of class: 'children were frequently quite emphatic about which was ... which ... without being able to explain their preference'.

Similarly, Campbell and Lawton (1970), in a study of 9 and

10-year-old's understanding of authority found that 'their social thinking ... seems to be outstripping their vocabulary', and went on to say, 'We may be underestimating the quality of their thinking, not overestimating it, by using interviews that rely on the children's ability to put their thoughts into words'. Looking at the concept of social stratification, they suggest that children can, from specific case studies, be 'thinking about society at a very high level of abstraction, which could be the foundation for developing a very sophisticated social analysis'. As they point out, most primary schools draw case studies from other cultures or from history, rarely from the present.

This does not necessarily mean that children are not actively using their experiences of contemporary society in such seemingly remote case studies. As an example of this from my own teaching, in a study of the local area based on 1861 census records, using a database program on a microcomputer, I found 9 and 10-year-old children beginning to create categories of rich, poor and an intermediate group, based on the occupations of the householder. They matched these categories (the definitions of which took much discussion) to residential zones in the area and drew maps of these; to my surprise they were confidently using terms such as 'class' and 'category' to describe what they were doing (Ross, 1985). This might be contrasted with the findings of Himmelweit and others (1952) that most 13-14-year-old boys were unable to understand a question referring to social class.

The perception of the relationship between the monarch and the premier is particularly useful in helping determine levels of political sophistication (Greenstein *et al*, 1969; Stevens, 1982). Greenstein and his colleagues found most primary aged children ascribing greater powers to the Queen than to the Prime Minister, with middle class children having a significantly higher level of political realism than working class children.

Jackson (1971) investigated what political figures and symbols children between 4 and 8 could identify and which they preferred. They were shown collections of pictures, for example of a set of flags, and asked to choose which they preferred. Then they were asked to name the Union Flag, or one of the political figures on the other sheets (policeman, Queen in ordinary dress, Queen in court dress and the Prime Minister). Of the 4-year-olds, over two-thirds identified with the Union Flag and the policeman, and over half with the Queen (court dress). But less than half could say what the policeman's job was, and only a sixth could identify the Queen or

the Union Flag. By the age of 6, four-fifths of children were choosing the flag, the policeman and the Queen, and almost a third the Prime Minister. The same proportion were able to identify the policeman's job, and two-thirds could identify the Queen. A half named the Union Flag, just under a third named the Prime Minister and 5 per cent of children could name their country. At the age of 8, the identification with the policeman, the Queen and the flag was over 90 per cent and the Prime Minister over 70 per cent. By this age, almost the same proportions of children were able to successfully name each.

Children's preferences and orientations to these political figures are expressed before they can identify the figure. Jackson's study also investigated whether children saw political figures as benevolent or not, and their perceptions of the relative power of the policeman, the Queen and the Prime Minister. In both cases he found a rising awareness and political sophistication over the age range.

Children are, therefore, aware of political figures, and a study by Stradling and Zurick (1971) found that when children were asked to give the name of a famous person that they would like to be, and one that they would not like to be, it was only in the youngest ages in their study (8 and 9-year-olds) that political figures were more often chosen as positive exemplars than negative exemplars. From 9 years onwards, they more often negatively identify with political figures. The particular political figures chosen to identify with positively were often royalty or such figures as Winston Churchill. The following table extracts some findings on the children at primary age. Children's choice of exemplars in this study appears to be more related to social class than to gender (though girls were more positive about royalty, and boys less favourably disposed to Harold Wilson). Middle class primary school children were more likely to negatively identify with political figures, and working class children more likely to positively identify with them. The significance of the study is perhaps more that some children know sufficient about political figures to feel confident that they can make judgments about them.

Studies of Political Learning

Margerison (1968) encouraged children to form their own society: he found them discussing morality and ethics in law-making. The

Table 1: Choice of Exemplars (percentages)

Positive identification			Exemplar	Negative identification		
8-9 years	9-10 years	10-11 years		8-9 years	9-10 years	10-11 years
<i>Political figures</i>						
<i>(a) UK party politicians:</i>						
2	4	0	Harold Wilson	14	27	27
3	2	4	others	3	6	10
<i>(b) UK royalty, etc.</i>						
8	16	7	Royalty	2	7	3
8	4	8	Winston Churchill	0	0	0
<i>(c) Foreign politicians</i>						
0	0	0	Adolf Hitler	2	3	6
4	3	2	other	2	3	9
9	9	10	<i>(d) National heroes</i>	1	1	4
34	38	31	Total Political	24	47	59
<i>Non-political figures</i>						
1	6	8	<i>(a) Scientists/artists</i>	0	0	0
16	18	13	<i>(b) Entertainers</i>	11	14	18
2	4	4	<i>(c) Historical</i>	1	4	1
10	9	14	<i>(d) Sports</i>	5	5	4
11	5	14	<i>(e) Others</i>	14	12	8
40	42	53	Total Non-political	31	35	31

Source: Stradling and Zurick (1971) Table 1.

regulation of cheating in the market place, for example, was seen as an important issue by the class. There was no direct *political* learning occurring, but the children were bringing to the socio-drama a wide variety of observations about adult political behaviour, and a number of the appropriate terms, which they used to model their own society.

Another example of the extent to which children are able to transfer concepts between real and simulated contexts can be seen in the following discussions of London 8 and 9-year-olds taken from my own teaching (Ross, 1981). Children in groups of about eight had created their own societies on a desert island: they had chosen

jobs, made rules, selected leaders, and were then asked what they would do in their spare time. When some chose quite dangerous activities, such as exploring the deep forest, others objected:

Child 1: It might be dangerous, because there's probably dangerous animals and they might attack you.

Child 2: You could get killed or something. We'd be looking for them everywhere.

Child 3: But it's us going up there, not anyone else.

Child 1: You could get killed.

Child 3: But it's only us going there, not you.

Child 2: But if you get killed, *we'll* have to do *your* jobs for you. We'll have to share out your jobs and do more work.

Child 1: So we should have a rule to stop you.

After much discussion about individual rights and group responsibilities, they eventually decided by a narrow margin to make a rule forbidding unnecessary dangerous activities. This problem was then taken to the whole class, and discussed in terms of limiting the individual's freedom to smoke.

Child 4: They could kill themselves, smoking too much.

Child 5: My grandad had to have an operation 'cos he smoked too much.

Child 6: My mum smokes, and she's always coughing.

Should there be a law to prevent people smoking, I asked.

Child 3: It's up to them if they want to smoke, it's not up to the country to stop it.

Child 8: If they didn't stop smoking, and when they died, and it wouldn't be the government's fault, it'd be their own fault.

Teacher: Does anyone know anyone who's had lung cancer? What happened to them?

Child 4: They went to hospital ... then they died.

Teacher: Who pays for hospitals?

Child 5: Social security ...

Child 4: People ... us.

Child 2: They have to have expensive hospitals.

Child 4: If people stopped smoking, you wouldn't have to have operations and that.

Child 3: So we'd save money.

These examples support the views of Connell (1971), whose study of Australian primary school children led him to see them as *active* agents in the construction of their own world political view. Children's source material is derived from their social experiences at home or at schools, but they actively select and interpret those parts that they see as relevant. This is also seen in Steven's study of London primary school children talking about macro-politics (1982). Her conclusions are useful at this stage:

At 7 years old

Political thinking is intuitive and symbolic; ideas discrete and unstructured; but they have made contact with the political and some have a conceptual base — information, awareness, interest and working vocabulary.

At 8 years old

Political language develops and some political events may be described; some political relationships were known but not understood.

At 9 years old

Political discussion became more balanced, children introducing and following new areas of discussion; a stronger commitment to social ideals.

At 10 years old

Fewer speculative political suggestions, and fewer extended examples are used — instead an attempt to relate to political reality. Some consistency of views, and evidence of evaluation.

At 11 years old

Greater linguistic ability, and a greater competency with political concepts; political issues were related to political structures; political processes understood and discussed to an extent — for example, the accountability of government.

Steven's study was, as were many of the studies referred to above, based on observation of children's behaviour — in this case their performance in a series of semi-structured discussions. If these are the conclusions — that children are not apolitical — then how do children learn their politics?

From Where Do Children Acquire Political Concepts?

As Greenstein and his colleagues observe in the study referred to above (1969), 'assumptions about monarchical power are not the result of deliberate inculcation by the schools ... [but] result from the absence of any specific inculcation whatsoever. ... The vacuum is filled by casual absorption of impressions from family, friends and the mass media and by untutored juvenile reasoning about how things "must work".'

Yet Hess and Torney (1967) conclude that it is the school that is the prime agent of political socialization, not the home. This apparent contradiction may arise partly from some lack of definition of what is political. Hess and Torney, along with Connell and Stevens, are more concerned with major or macro political understanding — the awareness that children have of national political figures and issues but, as Harber (1980) has suggested, children may learn much more in the way of political attitudes and concepts from the micro-politics of everyday life. Harwood (1985) argues that it is 'personal' politics that dominate the interest of 5–7-year-olds, and that 'national' and 'global' politics do not replace personal and local issues until about 11 years old.

Children are aware of, and are members of, society from birth. It could be argued that the development of the relationship between infant and mother is the first lesson in political power relationships. Certainly by the time that children are of school age, they have learned a great deal about the ways in which those immediately around them — generally their family — respond to other social groups, whether ethnic or in terms of social class. From within the family, they probably also acquire a knowledge of the relationships between power and gender. But these cannot be termed understanding: what has been learned is a set of implicit values, rather than necessarily any critical awareness. It is only through the experience of meeting a contrasting set of values that young children begin to become aware that there may be a range of possible political and social relationships.

Peer group learning may also reinforce stereotypes of what is politically correct, although the wider range of children's experiences met in a social group will, in many areas of the country, provide a contrast with the child's own family's political attitudes. These contrasts could be successfully used to help children develop a set of explicit 'political' concepts of cooperation, conflict, change, tradition, power, authority, and so on (ILEA, 1978 and 1980). What

nearly all children learn from interacting with their peers, however, are the skills of micro-politics. Away from the gerontocracy of the family, children need to evolve systems of negotiation, rule-forming and rule enforcement. The political behaviour of children in the playground is another area that could be studied by children themselves to achieve a broader understanding of the political. For example, a study of how a particular playground game evolves and changes, its traditions, its rules, and how the rules are made and enforced lets children analyze their own abilities and experiences of managing and participating in a social group.

The political world of the child is always present, even though it may often be purely implicit. One useful field in which to observe this is the area of children's fiction, although the same phenomena may be seen in other media. All children's literature is located in a political context although the author may not necessarily be aware of it.

It may now, at a distance of seventy years or more, be relatively easy for us to detect the political nuances in, for example, Percy Westerman's jingoistic adventures, or the racial stereotypes in Edgar Rice Burroughs. In more contemporary fiction, the reflection of implicit values may more closely reflect our own, and be less easily discerned. Enid Blyton's unchanging world, with a political order based on the hierarchy of a prep school, is not seen by most adults as political, yet if this is the only form of social organization shown in fiction, it becomes political indoctrination (Leeson, 1984).

It is only when some contrasting political organization is depicted in a children's book that the stereotype becomes seen. For example, picture books for the young child often show family relationships in which males make the important decisions: in Judith Kerr's *The Tiger who came to Tea* (1968), the mother and daughter are bemused by the lack of food and water in the house after the tiger has visited them. It is only when father returns from work that he immediately suggests the solution — to go out and get supper from a cafe. Contrast this with Mary Dickinson's *Alex* series (for example, *Alex's Bed*, 1980), where the mother is constantly coming up with ideas, and takes on traditionally male roles, such as carpentry, in order to execute them. Political tales can be even more explicit: the author/illustrator Michael Foreman's *Moose* (1971) is a barely disguised political tract for 5 and 6-year-olds about international non-alignment, in which the eagle and the bear exhaust themselves, their resources and their allies in conflict, while the peaceable moose recruits all the other animals to deliberately opt out

of the struggle. The same author's *Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish* (1972) is an attack on aspects of capitalism and on industrial pollution; 'the earth belongs to everyone, not parts of it to certain people but all of it to everyone, to be enjoyed and cared for. . . . It is all yours, but it is also all mine' (p. 28).

For older children, Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* (1908) is an example of an author unconsciously mirroring his own society — the upper classes selfishly enjoying themselves at the expense of the very poor (Needle, 1984). Yet it may only be when a novel deliberately challenges this, as in Jan Needle's *Wild Wood*, in which the reader sees the same events through the eyes of the weasels and ferrets that the implicit and pervasive political values of the first novel are detected (Watson, 1984).

A few books portray a political order so precisely that it is possible for primary school children to draw out and explicate the political system in discussion. I have used both Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) and Richard Adams' *Watership Down* (1972) in this way, with children constructing hierarchical patterns of relationship between the characters.

Just as many children's books unwittingly convey political messages — usually of the status quo — so can the organization of the school provide children with another set of experiences in their political socialization. The power of the headteacher and the too-often subservient relationship between teachers and other adults working in the school presents a model of implicit hierarchy and class. It can be interesting to observe young children's attempts to organize this as a model of power relationships. Sometimes they will describe the school-keeper or the school secretary as being in charge of the whole school. In some schools, this may be a particularly astute observation!

Children's 'casual absorption' of political phenomena in this way, whether from family, peers, media or school needs to be not merely experienced, but discussed and contrasted with possible alternatives. The political experience which most primary aged children now go through is a deep and pervasive form of indoctrination. Teachers are unwilling, however, to take on the discussion of political ideas with children. Denscombe and Conway (1982) examined teachers' attitudes to teaching Development Education, and found that most practitioners strongly resisted the suggestion that the subject might be considered 'political'.

Harwood (1986) has analyzed the views of a number of teachers about the various roles that might be adopted in discussion:

he found that the most popular position was that of 'impartial chairperson', ensuring that all viewpoints are represented, but never stating their own position. Critics would suggest (*Times Educational Supplement*, 1985) that certain political issues are such that impartiality would be improper. For example, in the case of a local family about to be deported, the classmates of the children under threat expected their teachers to give at least moral support. The notion of equal time for the National Front is hardly tenable in schools.

Active Political Learning

A few primary schools have developed a political curriculum. In some cases (*Times Educational Supplement*, 1985) this has arisen from macro-political issues that are relevant to the children's experience. More often, the curriculum offers opportunities for the development of political skills at the micro level.

The 'Island Society' project, for example, is now common in many schools. Described above by Margerison, it has been repeated and extended in several directions, and is now available in published form (ILEA, 1979).

School councils are a more explicit form of political education. Children elect their own representatives, who consider issues about the school and generally advise the headteacher. They may make rules about school behaviour, for example. Cohen (1981) describes a Dutch school of 5-10-year-olds where the school parliament consists of two representatives of each class who meet first with their own class, and then at a monthly meeting to decide on such issues as the time at which school starts, and whether animals should be kept in the classrooms. Cohen suggests that the children gained experience in reaching both decisions and in achieving a consensus. A south London primary school has an elected council that moved from discussing practical arrangements of school administration (for example, the queuing arrangements for teachers and children at lunch time) to the allocation of certain school funds (Stainton, 1983). The teacher in this last case referred to the use of the council to achieve a two-way flow of information.

A continuing council like this seems rather different from the more common ad-hoc consultancy arrangements to achieve a consensus on a particular issue. For example, in one primary school a council debated the playing of football in the school playground at

break times, a practice that allowed a small group of children to monopolize most of the space. An arrangement was reached to limit the times and areas in which football could be played and the rules that were reached were constantly being brought up and modified at subsequent meetings. This monitoring role kept the children aware of their part in establishing the system. In contrast, another primary school gathered the children together on one occasion, at which the children decided to ban football altogether. After a few months, the way in which the rule was achieved was forgotten, and it was seen by many children as another example of adult imposed and seemingly arbitrary authority.

Descriptions of schools with councils, and of several of the 'Island' experiments, refer to the way in which children mimic adult political activity — organizing elections, counting votes, etc. (Cohen, 1981; Margerison, 1968; Riches, 1974; Ross, 1984; Stainton, 1983). By the age of 9, many children seem to have observed sufficient adult behaviour to be able to understand why secret ballots are used, how votes are counted, what political opinion polls are about, and some of the functions of political parties. In an election organized in my class, the several children who stood for election showed considerable skill in canvassing for votes. Three began making quite subtle shifts in the emphases of their manifestos as the campaign progressed. This particular school election followed a General Election (in Riches, 1974, there was a local election). It seems possible that the heightened attention in the media at times such as these provides a certain degree of information about such political procedures, and some children are able to transfer such concepts to their immediate activities.

Political Learning in the Primary Curriculum

Most teachers in primary schools would be uneasy if asked to add political education to the curriculum (Denscombe and Conway, 1982). If they were convinced of its value, they would probably want to know just how it could be taught. They might quite reasonably point out that children cannot be having elections each month, or taking part in deserted island-type simulations all year.

Part of the problem is that few teachers receive a satisfactory political education themselves during their initial training. This is particularly true of primary teachers emerging from the BEd route, and the restrictions imposed by the Council for the Accreditation of

Teacher Education (CATE) are likely to worsen the situation. Teachers need to be able to recognize the political in what they already teach. This not only makes them aware of the inherent conservative bias in the curriculum, but could also make them aware of the potentialities for developing political skills and ideas in other curriculum areas.

The development of political ideas through Development Education has already been suggested (Denscombe and Conway, 1982). Industry Education provides another forum for such learning. For example, children can both discuss the social organization of a workplace (which invariably has a political dimension), or interact in a simulation or a mini-enterprise activity. The Schools Curriculum Industry Partnership (SCIP) has been encouraging primary schools to use local workplaces as curriculum resources in this way since 1982.

Children's development of concepts of power and authority, for example, can come about partly through talking to people at work about the power relationships in which they are involved. Primary school children are well able to explore the notion that 'somebody is in charge', 'the Guvnor', often taking such ideas from remarks of their parents (Clover and Hutchings, 1986). 'Who tells you what to do?' and 'What happens if you don't do it?' are very natural questions and from a series of such questions children can often piece together a hierarchical set of relationships.

I observed the development of the concept of hierarchy in a class of children over four years, from first to fourth year juniors. In the first year the teacher was engaged in a project on families. As part of this most children constructed their own family tree. There was a variety of structures, and post-nuclear family relationships sometimes were not easy to describe in this way. Not strictly a hierarchy, it nevertheless in some ways corresponded to the child's perception of power relationships. It certainly introduced a graphic way of showing relationships between people.

In the next year, part of a project on the school as a workplace included groups of children interviewing the members of staff, teaching and non-teaching. They cut out drawings of each individual and, at the teacher's suggestion, arranged them to show how the school worked. The suggestion that the headteacher go at the top 'because he's in charge' came from one child, and the rest of the figures fell into place. The teacher did mention the word hierarchy to some children, describing what they had assembled, and the word was brought back by one child the following year as 'higher arky'

— perhaps not just a simple error but indicative of some reasoning ability.

The same children in their third junior year visited a local light engineering factory on two occasions, and several workers (and a director) visited the school. During this they were encouraged again to summarize their findings in a hierarchical chart. Some children referred to this as 'the factory tree'. This work was part of a school-wide industry project. In order to test whether the children could effectively transfer such concepts to other situations, some non-verbal tests were devised that included re-arranging pictures of a hypothetical toy manufacturer's workers into a chart to show the organization. The results were compared to those of a class of a similar age who had studied a supermarket in which the managerial structure was less obvious than in the engineering works. Although the sample was small, there was a significant difference between the ability of the two groups to construct a hierarchy (86 per cent to 68 per cent).

In the fourth year, that year's class teacher introduced work on the middle ages. Describing the feudal system, she was immediately informed by several children that this was a hierarchy, and most of the class were able to independently construct a chart to show this.

Conclusion

Political education in primary schools is never likely to become a strongly identified subject within the curriculum. This is not only because the ethos of contemporary primary education runs counter to the idea of discrete subjects, but also because there is a limit to the number of areas of experience that every primary teacher can be expected to introduce to their class. Political education in the foreseeable future is likely to be introduced by only a fraction of primary teachers, despite the identification of the area by the DES as 'one of the principal functions of education' (DES, 1986). The size of that fraction may increase, particularly if the initial education of primary teachers (and INSET provision) is required to include consideration of political education.

But the thrust of this chapter has been to move from the evidence that shows the political understandings that nearly all children show, and the undoubted political competence that some children can achieve, to consider in what curricular guise political education will probably occur in schools. Political education will be

treated both within other social areas of the curriculum — social and environmental studies, industry work, world development studies, history, drama and the like — and within the school's hidden curriculum; the way in which the school is organized, the way in which rules and codes of conduct are achieved, and the respect teachers and schools show for children's rights and duties. Or, as the Department of Education and Science would prefer, 'duties and rights'. The *Draft Statement of Principles* (DES, 1986), issued on 4 February, has a careful hand-written emendation, deleting the original 'rights and duties' of citizenship, and substituting 'duties and rights'!

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Political Education 14–16

Clive Harber

Introduction

In 1969 a 15-year-old girl wrote that in schools pupils should learn about

The government and how it works and the different political parties should be dealt with in some detail in history. Many people either do not vote at all or they just choose a name of a candidate not knowing why they voted for him at all. Politics of the major countries and why their particular system works for them should also be discussed. (Blishen, 1969, p. 97)

In 1970 the voting age was lowered to 18 and in 1972/73 the school leaving age was raised to 16. Not only, therefore, were some pupils voting in the sixth form but all pupils would vote very soon after leaving school. Concern about this more direct role of schools in the preparation of citizens, coupled with evidence of widespread political ignorance among 15-year-olds (Stradling, 1977), contributed to the growing debate about the need for more political education in schools, especially during the last two years of compulsory schooling.

Whilst there are still those who would '... consider that politically contentious subjects should form no part of the curriculum for those below the age of 16' (Scruton *et al*, 1985), there are signs that there is support for political education at secondary school level amongst pupils, parents and teachers. Pupils in Northamptonshire were asked their opinions about the secondary school curriculum (an event in itself). The sixth formers said that better ways of teaching controversial issues and more talk and discussion were

needed. They felt that pupils needed to know how to influence political decisions (*Times Educational Supplement*, 23 November 1984). Fifty teachers who entered a national curriculum competition came to the near unanimous decision that politics should be an essential part of any 14–16 curriculum (*Times Educational Supplement*, 28 November 1983). Much to the surprise of a journalist in the *Daily Telegraph* a sample of adults were strongly in favour of more rather than less political education (21 January 1985). At an official level also there has been considerable support for political education from HMI. In *Curriculum 11–16: Towards a Statement of Entitlement* (DES, 1983) they note that from 1977 they came to accept the argument that pupils need to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for political and social participation in the democratic society to which they belong and that pupils faced the common experience of living in a world that is increasingly international, multiethnic and interdependent both economically and politically.

The Extent of Political Education 14–16

How much political education exists at this level? Here we shall be concerned with explicit, planned and open political education, i.e. an area of study entitled politics, government, civics etc. rather than with the school as an agent socializing political values (Harber, 1986a) or with the indirect teaching of politics via subjects such as history, geography, English etc. (Harber, 1985). However, as Hill (1983 and 1984) notes in a nationwide survey, the varied nomenclature used in the social sciences and humanities makes categorization, and hence counting, very difficult. At GCE 'O' level some 12,577 took an examination in government and politics in 1983 (Prout, 1985) while the DES includes politics under the generic title of 'social studies' for CSE for which there were 91,591 entries in 1984 (DES, 1984).

Hill's survey looked at provision in social sciences, social studies and humanities by LEAs and found large geographical variations (Hill, 1983). Thus while one third of schools in St. Helens and Norfolk offer politics at CSE and 'O' level respectively, the average among sixty-eight LEAs is only 3 per cent and 9 per cent and thirty-nine and seventeen offer no courses exclusively concerned with

Table 1: League Table Comparison of LEAs with Highest and Lowest Percentages of Their Schools/Colleges Offering CSE and 'O' level in Politics

CSE	%	'O'	%
1. St. Helens	33	1. Norfolk	33
2. Enfield	24	2. Hampshire	42
3. Kingston	22	3. Rochdale	40
4. Norfolk	19	4. Stockport	33
5e (E. Sussex	16	5e (Havering	30
(W. Sussex	16	(W. Sussex	30
6. Bradford	13		
7e (Sheffield	11	7. Barnsley	28
(Knowsley	11	8. Enfield	25
68 LEA average	3	69 LEA average	9
Bottom 39 LEAs	0	Bottom 17 LEAs	0

politics at all. In social studies, where modular provision for political education is most likely, the figures are higher. (See Table 2)

Another survey was based on a 10 per cent sample of schools in England and Wales and examined the provision of political education in secondary schools of all types (Stradling and Noctor, 1981). The findings of this survey are presented in Table 3. Thus half the sample of schools preferred either to provide political education indirectly through other subjects or not at all. Reasons given for this were the overcrowded timetable, shortages of qualified staff, inappropriateness for the age range and its controversial nature. However, about half the sample offered some form of explicit political education either through exclusive provision in a politics course or through modular provision. This represented a doubling between 1977 and 1981.

In terms of courses in politics exclusively, there were fifteen optional GCE and CSE examination courses and two compulsory CSE examination courses. There were also seventeen non-examined courses, usually entitled civics, though two schools called courses 'political education' and 'community politics'. Examined modular provision tends to be predominantly CSE rather than GCE, though

Table 2: League Table Comparison of LEA's with Highest and Lowest Percentages of Their Schools/Colleges Offering CSE and 'O' level in Social Studies

CSE		%	'O'		%
1.	Ealing	94	1.	Norfolk	54
2.	Haringey	93	2.	Enfield	50
3.	Croydon	90	3.	Suffolk	43
4.	W. Sussex	78	4e	(Staffs	30
5.	Enfield	71		(Doncaster	30
6.	Salford	67	6.	Rochdale	27
7.	Trafford	98	7.	Oldham	24
8e	(Canbs.	55	8.	Kirklees	21
	(Derryshire	55			
69 LEA ave.		29	70 LEA ave.		7
1.	Warwickshire	3	Bottom 24 LEAs		0
2.	Bucks	3			
3.	Cornwall	3			
4.	Avon	2			
5.	(Bromley	0			
	(Stockport	0			
	(Newcastle	0			
	(Sutton	0			

Table 3: Provision of Political Education By Number of Schools

	Number of schools	Percentage of total sample (N = 422)
No provision	90	21
Exclusive courses	92	22
Modular provision	125	30
Indirect provision	298	71

The total percentages exceed 100 per cent because some schools offer more than one form of provision

nearly four-fifths were non-examined. Modular courses were usually organized by social studies/humanities departments.

The Programme for Political Education

Central to the debate about political education for the 14–16 age group is the Hansard Society's Programme for Political Education, a set of aims and objectives developed during the 1970s and designed to act as guidelines for practitioners of political education (Crick and Porter, 1978). While the original proposals have been discussed and modified since (Porter, 1979, 1981 and 1985) the central tenet remains — political education should aim not just to transmit political knowledge but should also develop political skills and values. This compound of knowledge, skills and values was termed 'political literacy'.

The political knowledge component of political literacy was to differ considerably in scope and approach from traditional 'civics' and 'British Constitution'. It would be concerned with the political concepts involved in the way political decisions are made and political conflicts are resolved and managed. This would mean analyzing political behaviour across the whole range of political organizations and processes (pressure groups, political parties, mass media, political socialization etc.) and not just giving a descriptive account of the institutions of central government. Recent writing on the PPE has also favoured a further extension of the scope of political knowledge by including an examination of the politics of everyday life i.e. the way in which the key elements of politics (disagreement-choice-decisions-rules etc.) are present in everyday group contexts — the family, the school, the gang, the office etc.

A second recommendation related to political knowledge was that courses should be organized around political issues (unemployment, nuclear weapons, electoral reform, abortion, local issues etc.) and that pupils would learn about institutions, organizations and processes as they explored and discussed the controversial issues. However, a number of problems have been identified with this approach (Brown and Townley, 1981; Harber, 1981). The first is that the content of courses is determined by the agenda of public debate as interpreted by the teaching staff and this may lead to the acceptance of 'official' definitions of issues rather than the recogni-

tion of alternative issues. Teachers themselves may find it difficult to distinguish between short-term, ephemeral issues and long-term, significant ones. Second, the image of the adult world that emerges from a course based on issues and problems is one in which crisis and conflict are endemic and therefore misses the process (i.e. legitimization) that creates stability and order. Third, there is a risk that concentrating on issues can mean that discussion gets bogged down in the detail of an issue and that basic political concepts and important features of organizations and institutions get ignored i.e. not being able to see the wood for the trees. Finally, there is the practical problem of the shortage of suitable teaching resources designed in this manner and thus the risk that schools will rely too heavily on the popular media which may themselves be a contributory factor in the issue and the way it is perceived. Nevertheless, whether or not political education courses actually use political issues as their starting point, the PPE did highlight the importance of discussing controversial political issues in the classroom and the corollary that without such discussion political education courses will be arid and descriptive.

The PPE also identified a set of procedural values which underpin the notion of political literacy. These are:

- (i) Willingness to adopt a critical stance towards political information.
- (ii) Willingness to give reasons why one holds a view or acts in a certain way and to expect similar reasons from others.
- (iii) Respect for evidence in forming and holding political opinions.
- (iv) Willingness to be open to the possibility of changing one's own attitudes and values in the light of evidence.
- (v) To value fairness as a criterion for judging and making decisions.
- (vi) To value the freedom to choose between political alternatives.
- (vii) Toleration of a diversity of ideas, beliefs, values and interests. (Porter, 1979)

Collectively these can be taken as the ideological stance of the PPE, a point now more explicitly recognized by one of the authors of the PPE documents who comments that:

The aims of politics courses may be categorized in various ways but the most significant must be according to their ideological connotations. Thus any politics course may be classified according to its aims and located at some point along an ideological spectrum. (Porter, 1985)

It is, for example, possible to identify three broad positions in political education along an ideological spectrum — conservative, liberal/reformist and radical.

- (i) The conservative approach derives its aims from the needs of the social and political system as perceived by those in power and focuses on political knowledge — in particular on how the present system is believed to function (including the 'acceptable' channels of influence) and the duties and responsibilities of the subject. Political skills are not emphasized and values are system supporting.
- (ii) The liberal/reformist approach derives its aims from the perceived political needs of individuals, groups or classes. It emphasizes rights, minorities and political issues. There is an emphasis not only on analytical skills but also on participatory and organizing skills. There is support for liberal democratic values (majority rule, minority rights, freedom of speech and association etc.) and explicit support for procedural values that encourage the appreciation of other points of view, recognition of the complexity of political problems and weighing the evidence before acting.
- (iii) The radical approach derives its aims from a theoretical analysis of society and the perceived present and future needs of a class within that society. It involves a critical understanding of society and of the class's life chances within it plus a knowledge of alternative forms of social organization. There is an emphasis on skills, especially organizing skills for collective action. (adapted from Porter, 1983)

The PPE via its procedural values fits into the liberal/reformist ideological mould. However, it can be argued that it is the only *educational* approach of the three in that it doesn't suggest that it has the correct substantive answer, for example, a conservative desire

to protect the existing system or a radical desire to transform the system in a certain direction. Instead a range of possible alternatives and modes of action are discussed and individuals are left to make up their own minds. In fact, the accusation that is often levelled against advocates of more political education in schools, that of the danger of bias and indoctrination, tends to come from those who would protect their own, conservative position in schools (Harber, 1984). Nevertheless, support for the liberal/reformist values of the PPE does not mean that there are not limits to tolerance and freedom of discussion in the classroom (for example, hostile racist statements) though the precise boundaries of these limits are subject to individual interpretation and will vary from context to context (Stradling *et al*, 1984).

CSE and GCE

The following two sections assess the extent to which the recommendations of the PPE are reflected in examination provision in political education for 14–16-year-olds. This section focuses on GCE 'O' level and Mode 1 CSE courses. Of their very nature school-based Mode 3 CSE courses are very diverse and it is therefore difficult to generalize about the extent to which they adopt a political literacy approach. In particular both this section and the one that follows on GCSE will examine the extent to which procedural values are acknowledged and political skills are assessed and the degree to which examination boards emphasize political issues and a broad definition of 'the political'.

In response to a letter to all examination boards asking for copies of 'any syllabus that you produce that deals with politics either wholly or in part' I received copies of eight CSE, four GCE and four GCSE syllabuses (see appendix). The definition of what constituted political education was therefore left to the examination boards. A ninth CSE board, the North Regional Examination Board, simply replied that it did not 'examine any syllabus incorporating politics'. However, the fact that many CSE and GCE boards now openly recognize and incorporate a political element in their range of subjects (be it under the heading of civics, British constitution, social and political studies, government and politics, social studies etc.) is a step forward from the position at the end of the 1960s.

Political Knowledge

There are two ways in which political education can explore the ways in which politics directly affects the individual and is therefore relevant to everybody. The first is through the way in which decision-making at local and national levels, and the resulting laws, affects what can and cannot be done — rights and duties. This is covered in all syllabuses via the government institutions that make the law and the institutions of the law itself. The second is the way in which the basis of political activity — disagreement, choice, decision, rules etc. — are part of everyday human activity in groups and institutions such as schools and families. This second aspect, which involves a broadening of the notion of the political is one which opens up interesting possibilities for teaching (Harber, 1980; Jukes, 1985) but is one which is ignored in almost all CSE and GCE syllabuses. The one exception (the South East Regional Examination Board) however, is not very specific as it simply states 'The nature of politics and where political issues arise'. It is interesting that perhaps the best example of this approach is to be found in the JMB 'O' level Social Science. This course consciously draws on social psychology as part of its theoretical basis and, for example, mentions the 'Nature and consequences of conflict: aggression and violence. Face to face conflict.' and 'Various forms of power, authority and influence in small groups: leadership, friendship and communication patterns, peer groups, reference groups and significant others'. At the other end of the scale all CSE courses include an examination of some international political organizations whereas the GCE boards are more ethnocentric with only one of the four (Oxford University) mentioning international politics.

A second recommendation of the PPE as regards political knowledge was that greater prominence should be given to political issues. Whilst, as the above discussion suggested, courses might not be organized solely around political issues, it would be expected that courses concerned with politics would put emphasis on the consideration of political issues.

Certain examination boards put a strong emphasis on the teaching of political issues. The AEB GCE syllabus, for example, states that 'candidates should keep up to date with national and local political issues and draw upon these to illustrate their answers' while the South Eastern Region CSE in Social and Political Studies states that 'reference to current issues is vital'.

In the middle are two categories of syllabus. First, there are the

Table 4: *Emphasis on Political Issues in a Sample of GCE and CSE Syllabuses*

<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>
London University GCE Government and Political Studies.	JMB GCE Government, Economics and Commerce.	Oxford University GCE Political Studies. Yorkshire and Humberside CSE Civics.
AEB GCE Government and Politics.	NWREB CSE Government and Politics. SREB CSE British Constitution.	
SEREB CSE Social and Political Studies.	East Anglia CSE Social Studies. ASLEB CSE Social Studies. West Midlands CSE Social Studies. East Midlands CSE Social Studies.	

CSE social studies syllabuses. These include a politics component or module and also include topics — education, unemployment, gender, race etc. — which could be used to raise political issues. However, little emphasis is put on controversial political issues as a conscious and explicit aim in teaching the syllabus so it could be taken more or less seriously by teachers. Second, there are those syllabuses that are based more specifically around government and politics that, while they pay brief lipservice to problems and issues in their aims and introduction, set out a list of contents which could be interpreted in a highly institutional and mechanistic way, for example, parliament, the monarchy, the prime minister, local government, the legal system, political parties, pressure groups, the EEC etc. Both of these sorts of syllabus may or may not be taught in a manner that enables the discussion of political issues in the classroom. However, from what is known about 'over-directed teaching' in British schools (DES, 1985) and from the lack of discussion of procedural values in the syllabuses that are described below, it is likely that such discussion will feature less rather than more often in these courses.

Finally, there are those examination boards that make little attempt to deal with political issues, for example, the Oxford Board's Political Studies GCE states that: 'Candidates are expected to have studied, descriptively rather than analytically, the present-day functions of the British constitution and should support their answers where relevant to events both past and present' before listing the institutional features of the syllabus.

Political Skills

The PPE also included a list of political skills to be developed via political education. These are the ability to:

- (i) Interpret and evaluate political information and evidence.
 - (ii) Organize information through basic political concepts and generalizations.
 - (iii) Apply reasoning skills to political problems and construct sound arguments based on evidence.
 - (vi) Perceive consequences of taking or not taking political actions in given contexts.
 - (v) Express one's own interests, beliefs and viewpoints through an appropriate medium.
 - (vi) Participate in political discussion and debate.
 - (vii) Perceive and understand (if not agree with) the interests, beliefs and views of others.
 - (viii) Exercise empathy (to imagine what it might be like in someone else's shoes).
 - (ix) Participate in group decision-making.
 - (x) Effectively influence and/or change political situations.
- (Porter, 1979)

The only way that it is possible to ensure that teachers will include the development of political skills in their teaching method for examinations is if they are to be assessed as part of the qualification. This is because in practice teachers often start with assessment and work backwards i.e. their teaching is based on what they think will be assessed rather than their assessment being based on what they have decided to teach (Harber, 1983). To what extent do CSE and GCE boards use techniques that attempt to assess the range of political skills specified by the PPE?

All examination boards set out to examine the first three political skills listed above — the ability to interpret and evaluate political information and evidence, to organize political information and to apply reasoning skills to political problems and construct sound arguments based on evidence — and include congruent means of assessment i.e. essays and comprehension/evaluation exercises. Only one examination, however, the Southern Region British Constitution, contained any oral element so that verbal skills of arguing a case are not generally assessed at this level. Moreover, comprehension/evaluation is based on written materials (graphs, cartoons, extracts etc.). Yet political learning from the media comes from the television rather than newspapers and more consideration could be given to the use of videos of news broadcasts, party politicals and current affairs programmes in assessing this skill. Similar stimulus material can also be used to test another important skill — the ability to perceive and understand the interests, beliefs and views of others. This includes not only comprehending what has been said but also detecting the values and biases involved in political statements. Surprisingly, only four out of the eight CSE boards and two out of the four GCE boards explicitly state this as an aim while no boards mention the related skill of empathy or being able to put yourself into someone else's shoes — to understand why a person or group holds the values they do. Also absent is any attempt to assess the ability to participate in political discussion and debate though one syllabus (JMB Government, Economics and Commerce) states in passing that it aims to facilitate the ability to discuss current local and national problems.

A key notion in political literacy is that a politically literate person has a 'proclivity to action' i.e. could and would act politically when necessary. Despite occasional statements in their aims which nod in this direction such as 'to participate effectively as a citizen' (South Eastern Region CSE in Social and Political Studies), these courses are not really concerned with participatory or action skills such as perceiving the consequences of taking political action, expressing one's own interests through an appropriate medium, participating in group decision-making and effectively influencing or changing political situations. Probably the best classroom method for teaching and assessing such skills is problem-solving exercises. For example:

The local authority wishes to close down a popular youth club in the area because there has been 'trouble' there

according to one local newspaper. What could pupils do to resist? or

Plans have been made to build a by-pass round a town. This new, busy road will separate a school from its catchment area and older pupils feel that it will be dangerous, especially for younger pupils. What could they try and do in such circumstances? (Harber, 1983).

Assessment of the tasks and strategies involved in such problem-solving exercises of this nature is absent from these courses. Indeed, assessment of problem-solving and discussion skills, for example, would require more emphasis on course work and continuous assessment than these courses allow for. Assessment of the four GCE courses is by written examination only and while written examination is the dominant form of assessment in the CSE courses, six out of eight do offer a project or coursework though this is usually optional and seems to involve the collection and interpretation of other people's data rather than the candidate doing research of his or her own. None pay much attention to questions related to methodologies of doing research — interviews, surveys, participant observation etc. Yet the ability to gather information is important because it is related to two other political skills — arguing a case and trying to influence a political situation. It is also important because experiencing how social scientists do research raises the whole question of the nature and reliability of social and political knowledge.

Procedural Values

Despite the emphasis given to procedural values by the PPE, very little attention is given to them by GCE and CSE boards. Three of the CSE and one of the GCE boards note the importance of taking a 'critical stance' and two of the CSE boards mention a respect for reasoning and a respect for evidence but overall little guidance is given. This may to some degree reflect the extent to which the boards have not perceived their examinations as necessarily involving the teaching of controversial political issues. Indeed, it could be argued that by ignoring the values underlying their syllabuses the boards have given the impression that the subject matter can be transmitted in the traditional, descriptive, 'factual' and hence 'safe' manner by the teacher standing at the front and has thus enhanced the likelihood that it will. This in turn is likely to weaken the

development of political skills via these courses in the classroom. However, the range of political skills to be developed was already limited so that overall the syllabuses tend to cluster around the conservative-liberal/reformist end of the ideological spectrum outlined above with the majority nearer to the former than the latter.

GCSE

GCE and CSE level political education then is patchy in regard to the teaching of political issues and only a narrow range of political skills are assessed. There is little evidence of a wider interpretation of 'the political' or of consideration of procedural values. The creation of GCSE has offered an opportunity for fresh consideration to be given to examination based political education for this age group. Four GCSE courses will be discussed in order to assess progress to date.

Overall, it needs to be said that the debate surrounding GCSE has led to much fuller and more specific course guidelines than were issued for CSE and GCE. Three of the four courses clearly state the importance of teaching controversial issues and a fourth, the Northern Examining Association (NEA), while not emphasizing political issues in its general introduction, makes it clear from its amplification of the course that political issues are to be discussed. The East Anglian Board in particular goes into considerable detail about whether the subject matter of political education should be organized around institutions or issues. This introduction on the question of teaching political issues should help to diversify teaching method by leading to more discussion and group work in the classroom. However, it is still possible to teach controversial issues simply by providing lists of 'fors' and 'againsts' to be learnt off by heart for the examination. The boards could have placed more emphasis on the need for dialogue and exchange of ideas in the classroom by giving guidance and further reference on discussion method and the procedural values underlying democratic political debate. Course content focuses on local, national and some international (EEC, NATO and the Commonwealth) political institutions and issues and there is still no encouragement for candidates to examine the political relationships present in their daily lives in the family, school and youth club.

Like CSE and GCE, the four GCSE courses are all strong on the first three political skills listed above but three of the four Boards

are much more explicit about the need to be able to detect political values and bias and reflect this in their examination examples. The Welsh Joint Board, for example, has three extracts from different daily newspapers covering the same political event and asks questions about the values embodied in the language of each. Empathy is an aim of the East Anglian Board and this is reflected in a question on a piece of writing about unemployment which asks that the candidate 'Suggest arguments which the writer might offer to support the statement that "unemployment is the most sensitive political issue"' while a question from the NEA's draft examination asks candidates to 'Imagine that you are a councillor in this local authority and you are told the government wants you to cut ten million pounds from your spending. Suggest what you think would be the best way of doing this. Given reasons for your answer'. However, an opportunity has been missed in not including more action-oriented, problem-solving political skills of the type asked for in this single example from the four boards: 'Imagine that you are a citizen who objects to a road being built. Explain how you would try to stop it'. So these courses do not really reflect the 'proclivity to action' which is a key aim of political literacy.

All four examination groups recognize the importance of individual research by allocating 20-30 per cent of marks to this activity. The boards vary, however, in the range of research methodologies they suggest from the rather closed East Anglian 'journal' of critical reflections on a collection of newspaper cuttings, party hand-outs, government information sheets etc. on a political issue to the NEA's more open list of social science investigative techniques. While all four are useful exercises in data gathering, evaluation and organization only the NEA's research investigation directly raises the question of the nature and sources of political knowledge. Thus overall GCSE seems to be nudging the general tenor of examination provision in political education for this age group along the ideological spectrum from conservatism towards a more liberal/reformist approach though it has not fully taken on the aims of political literacy as set out in the PPE.

Non-Examination Political Education: The North East Political Education Project

Discussing the content of non-examination courses in political education presents the same problem as mode 3 CSE courses — great variety and frequent change. The final section of this chapter will therefore explore what is possible in the non-examination context in courses set up specifically on political literacy lines. The courses in question formed part of the North East Political Education Project (Llopis, 1984; McCabe 1984). This was a teacher-run project established in 1981 with a core of six schools that aimed to develop ideas for political education modules as they occur within the various non-examination social education courses ('social and personal education', 'social and life skills', 'preparation for adult life' etc.) that can increasingly be found in the fourth and fifth year of secondary schooling. Characteristically, teachers on these modular courses will be from a humanities background (history, geography, English, RE etc.) but few will have a politics background and few will have taught examination courses in politics. The NEPEP explicitly drew on the political literacy approach outlined above and the following discusses how this approach has been interpreted by the project and in one of the participant schools in particular — Blackfyne School in Consett. The discussion of the Blackfyne course is based on the published course guide (Smith, Southworth and Wilson, 1985) and on an interview with the teachers concerned.

The political education module at Blackfyne consists of two, ten week sessions of one hour a week and forms part of a core 'carousel' social education course for fourth and fifth years in which pupils also do health education, careers education etc. Interest in political education at the school began prior to the founding of the project with the various publications associated with the Programme for Political Education in the late 1970s (Stradling, 1977; Crick and Porter, 1978) and attendance at various short courses. However, as with other schools in the NEPEP the course only actually got started after an initiative from the headteacher. The first ten weeks of the course concentrates on the politics of everyday life via the family, the school, the community and work in order to explore the idea that conflict and decision-making are part of everybody's experience. The latter ten weeks looks at concepts and processes such as democracy, elections, political parties, law, Marxism and Communism and local government.

The course openly recognizes the controversial nature of political education but argues that bias is less likely to occur in such a course than outside the school through the family and the media or inside the school in subjects where teachers are less aware of the problem. In practice, however, in dealing with controversial issues, the initial intolerance of pupils and the socialized view that there must be a 'right answer', has meant continual insistence by staff on the need for procedural values such as respect for evidence and the need for reason. The role of staff in handling discussion of issues (a balanced approach, neutral chairperson, stated commitment, devil's advocate etc.) varies from debate to debate depending on the degree of consensus in the classroom, though use of team teaching has facilitated the expression and discussion of a range of views. However, there are always limits to free discussion — reference to individual members of staff when discussing the politics of the school, for example, though, as suggested above, the precise boundaries are subject to individual interpretation and vary from context to context. The example earlier in the chapter of the expression of racist statements has occurred at Blackfyne and the teachers felt that in combatting racism by reason and evidence they could let the discussion go further than in a multiethnic school where racist comments were likely to cause direct personal offence. This became an important question when the National Front distributed leaflets to some of the pupils in the school (*Times Educational Supplement*, 20 June 1986).

The flexibility of the non-examination context has meant that both the NEPEP in general and Blackfyne in particular have been able to develop lessons that use the wide range of methods (discussion, group work, films, simulations etc.) that are necessary to develop the political skills element of political literacy. (Though it is a little surprising that detection of values and bias in the mass media — a, if not the, key source of political information — is not given more prominence by either Blackfyne or in the NEPEP report itself.) Moreover, the political skills involved in the lessons are often action-oriented. In the resources and methods suggested by the NEPEP there are decision-making exercises aimed at identifying alternative strategies in political situations such as the threatened closure or merger of a school or an increase or decrease in the levels of expenditure available to a local council (Llopis, 1984). Lesson eight of the Blackfyne course poses four situations (a dispute among neighbours, road safety, the closure of a community centre and the

threat of pollution from a chemical works) to encourage pupils to think about what courses of action (seeing councillors, petitions, letters to the press etc.) they could follow and in which order.

Such action-oriented skills can spill over into political action itself. In Newcastle, for example, the threatened closure of a local swimming pool led pupils to get involved in the campaign to keep it open. As Llopis (1984) comments 'The exercise in which they became involved provided many opportunities for skill development and at the end of the day offered perhaps the most valuable learning experience of all, that nothing was changed by their political efforts.' She also notes the danger faced by the several schools that have encouraged pupils to plan and carry out campaigns to change or improve community facilities ... 'the school effort could be involved in unwelcome controversy. If it is too controlled, however, it becomes a meaningless exercise.' She suggests that a compromise tends to be the sort of problem solving exercise described above followed by identifying things in the neighbourhood that the pupils would like to see changed, discussing methods of initiating change and by practising skills like writing to councillors and MPs and designing leaflets and posters for display in the school (*ibid*).

At Blackfyne school lessons on political skills have also had their impact with one pupil making the mental connection between discussion on the course and possible action to change things by asking: 'Should you be telling us this?' When school parties were cancelled because of the teachers' industrial action fourth and fifth years demonstrated and handed in a petition. When the head decided that fifth years were not allowed in school at lunchtime, again due to industrial action, two pupils went to see him as a result of which he called all fifth and sixth formers together to explain his decision. When pupils become involved in a local issue, as some sixth formers did in a campaign against a proposed tertiary college, then staff on the political education course feel that they would be prepared both to give advice and warn of consequences.

This sort of incident raises another problem for such a political education course — to what extent is it at odds with the overall ethos of the school? At Blackfyne school the political education team feel that not all their colleagues are comfortable with their aim of developing a critical and questioning mind in pupils. Also, neither at Blackfyne, where there is no school council, nor in the NEPEP generally have schools worked with pupil council development or improvement. Llopis contrasts this absence of effective school councils with the situation in one school associated with the project

where pupils have moved beyond issues of uniform and school meals to where they are now considering issues of curriculum importance. Although, as Llopis notes, teachers have initially concentrated on the safer area of classroom lessons, there will inevitably be implications for school organization. How have others reacted? Both in the NEPEP schools in general and also in Blackfyne itself there has been little reaction or hostility and this seems to suggest that parents will support such courses if their purposes are explained and the course is well planned. In terms of pupil attitudes to political education courses, McCabe found his results in four schools 'positive and encouraging — remembering that this 14+ group is not an easy one, in general, to interest, and it is even less easy to get them to express an interest in school work in many situations'. A fifth school did its own questionnaire and found that 'Political lessons were rated as very helpful and quite important by 60 per cent of pupils' (McCabe, 1984). At Blackfyne a vote resulted in two-thirds of fourth and fifth years wanting to retain such a course while one third wanted to do an examination course instead. Overall, the Blackfyne teachers felt that pupils had reacted well to the more participant classroom atmosphere, with even the most reticent pupils participating at some stage because they could see that it was saying something about themselves and was about helping people to be able to try to get what they wanted from the political system. However, the social education courses of which these political education courses form a part are not usually assessed. This is because of the need for flexibility, the desire to avoid 'failure' in life skills and the question of the extent to which certain social and political skills can be assessed anyway. The extent to which they can have more of an effect on the level of political knowledge, skills and values of pupils than the minimal impact of 'civics' courses in the past (Stacey, 1978) remains an open question.

Conclusion

If schools are to make a worthwhile contribution to the political education of young people at secondary school then a number of problems remain. One is the need for more teachers trained in this area in schools. This is a problem at the level of initial teacher training where very few social scientists are trained in comparison with other subject areas and at the level of in-service training. Often teachers involved in the social education courses that are common

at this level have had little or no in-service training and as a consequence many courses are prescriptive, descriptive and conformist rather than critical, analytical and prepared to discuss possible alternatives and changes. In this regard it is disappointing how few teachers make use of professional associations that can offer advice about methods and resources. Very few teachers in the NEPEP, for example, were members of the Association for the Teachers of the Social Sciences, yet the journal *Social Science Teacher* regularly has articles, sections and whole issues devoted to practical classroom political education. (A guide to resources and methods in political education for this age range can be found in Harber, 1986b.) Another is the problem of assessment: is political education ideally part of a non-examination course or should it be part of the formal examination structure? Certainly the move to GCSE seems to be about to remove some of the old criticisms of GCE and CSE but the extent to which it is actually an improvement remains to be seen. There is thus still the choice between the credibility and legitimacy attached by pupils to certificates and the freedom and flexibility provided by non-examination courses. The extent to which the need for non-examination courses remains will depend on the degree to which the assessment of concepts and skills in most GCSE courses is sufficient to necessitate the participant classroom methods of political education based on the political literacy approach. At the moment this seems unlikely.

Appendix: Examination Syllabuses Discussed in Text

GCE 'O' Level

Associated Examining Board 'Government and Politics'
Joint Matriculation Board 'Government, Economics and Commerce'
London University 'Government and Political Studies'
Oxford University 'Political Studies'

CSE

Associated Lancashire Schools 'Social Studies'
East Anglia 'Social Studies'

East Midlands 'Social Studies'
North West Region 'Government and Politics'
South East Region 'Social and Political Studies'
Southern Region 'British Constitution'
West Midlands 'Social Studies'
Yorkshire and Humberside 'Civics'

GCSE

London and East Anglian Group 'British Government and Politics'
Northern Examining Association 'Politics and Government'
Southern Examining Group 'Political Studies'
Welsh Joint Education Committee 'Politics and Government'.

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Global and International Approaches in Political Education

Ian Lister

Developments in Political Education

The history of political education in Britain since the Second World War can be divided into three periods: the ancient or classic, where the majority of school pupils received no formal political education at all, and which lasted from the beginnings of the state system in 1870 until the 1970s; the modern, which was marked by the launching of the national programme for political education, with its central concept of political literacy, in 1974; and the period of the new movements and the vanguard educators, which is typified by the World Studies movement. Before 1974 the dominant tradition celebrated the myth of the apolitical nature of schools; in 1974 a new dynamic appeared in the form of political literacy; with world studies a new dynamic appeared in the form of global perspectives and the search for a social education appropriate to living in an interdependent world.

During the classic period (1870 until 1974) school pupils received a political education through the hidden curriculum. In the élite public schools, Eton and Harrow, for example, the select few — the silver spooners — learned leadership, and in the mass elementary schools the majority — the wooden spooners — learned followership. Empire Day was celebrated each year in all schools. (Across the globe, in Sydney, as late as around 1950, Bob Connell, who later did pioneering research in political education, [Connell, 1971] was given a fireman's helmet and dressed up as Britannia for the annual celebration at his primary school.) While the public schoolboys could learn something about politics through classics and history (two important subjects on their curriculum) it was argued that politics was too difficult for pupils of elementary school

age. In 1943, Sir Cyril Norwood (Headmaster of Harrow School, which filled the Cabinet with ministers) wrote, as Chairman of a national commission on secondary schools: 'Nothing but harm can result from attempts to interest pupils prematurely in matters which imply the experience of an adult ...' (Norwood, 1943). The two other main arguments used against teaching politics, and against political education, were that the established school subjects would achieve quite a lot in this regard anyway — an argument used as late as the 1960s when a DES pamphlet stated that the rising generation should be given 'as good a political education as may be, which means giving it an education in history' (DES, 1967) — and that there were great dangers of prejudice, bias and indoctrination. (Some argued, and some still argue, that the school curriculum should not contain any controversial issues at all and that it should deal only in established and non-contentious knowledge. Linked to the notion of the apolitical school was the notion of the neutrality of knowledge.) For a minority in the secondary schools some teaching about politics was offered in the form in 'British Constitution' where the main focus was the machinery of national and local politics — laws, institutions and 'the constitution'. Benemy's textbook *Whitehall — Town Hall*, which went into eight editions between 1960 and 1974, gives a good indication of the main areas of concern — the electorate, the constitution, the House of Commons, the government, the party system, and the House of Lords and the Crown form the first chapters of the book, with the last two chapters on the Commonwealth and on the future appearing as peripheral appendages — the first in space, the second in time.

Up to 1974 those arguing for the teaching of politics, and for political education, for all pupils in the secondary school were voices crying in the wilderness. They included Victor Gollancz (1918),¹ Michael Stewart (1938), Hugh Gaitskell (1939) and Margaret Cole (1942). There were also three organizations campaigning for political education — the New Education Fellowship (whose interests in holism, conflict-resolution and education for peace and international understanding anticipated that of today's vanguard educators)²; the Association for Education in Citizenship; and the Council for Education in World Citizenship. The first was part of the progressive movement, had famous supporters like Bertrand Russell and Tagore, and its sphere of influence included the progressive private schools, like Bedales, Dartington Hall and Summerhill. None of the organizations had an operational base in the schools attended by the majority of the population. They faced a problem of

how to get their ideas, (and sometimes their publications and materials), into the schools — a problem now faced by issue-based groups connected with the new movements.

The concept of political literacy attempted to break away from the dominant tradition (which provided the national programme for political education with its negative reference points). Instead of evading political *issues* it made them the basis for teaching and learning, part of Bernard Crick's interpretation of politics, as seen in his classic work *In Defence of Politics* (1962). Instead of limiting politics to leading political figures and the formal activities of central and local government it broadened the focus of 'the political' so that it could include the politics of schools and colleges and universities, firms, factories and trades unions, the politics of the environment and the politics of everyday life. Politics was redefined³ and, to some extent, relocated so that ordinary citizens might participate in the activity. The programme was less interested in promoting knowledge of politics as subject-content than in developing the political skills necessary for informed and effective participation in politics. Accordingly it encouraged a shift towards much more activity-based teaching and learning (such as problem-solving exercises; role play and socio-drama; and games and simulations). It was concerned about supporting values — but not the values of loyalty and allegiance to the powers that were but the values of democracy itself (which could give authority to those powers). It stressed the importance of upholding the procedural values of freedom, fairness, toleration and respect for truth (and evidence) and respect for reasoning. It argued that it was the democratic duty of the teacher to promote democratic procedural values and that it was also the democratic duty of the teacher *not* to try to promote substantive values, and that it was wrong for the teacher to act as a preacher in the classroom. The grand attempt was to establish a procedural framework in which issues could be identified, analyzed, argued about, acted on and, sometimes, resolved in a 'reasoning and reasonable', non-violent fashion. (It was little wonder that pupil questions about 'bent policemen', the IRA, and political violence were to prove particularly awkward for teachers in the programme's classrooms.)⁴ It was the resolve of the programme that such a political education should be for *all* secondary school pupils. All this is light years away from Sir Cyril Norwood and also from quite a lot of 'the voices crying in the wilderness', whose main concerns were a reform of content (curriculum reform as syllabus-revision) and a reform of access (so that more people might experi-

ence the traditional process of teacher — and the textbook — transmitted information). The thinking of the programme was influenced not only by Bernard Crick (with his concern that politics should be presented as a human activity and not as an institutional anatomy) and by me (and my concern to facilitate participation in such a way that politics would no longer be a spectator sport) but also by John Dewey, Paulo Freire and environmental educators like Colin Ward (1973). The programme maintained that we need to learn *for* democracy and not just *about* democracy (that is, we need the skills and the predisposition for democratic action). It went on to ask questions about democratic schools and democratic teaching and learning. It is not surprising that an approach which was issue-based and which had a dynamic notion of social knowledge should come under attack from conservatives of the Left (such as Max Morris, who thought that those under 16 were under-age for political education) and Dr. Rhodes Boyson (who thought that political education in schools would be a Pandora's box). There are three criticisms/reservations which have been made about the programme for political education which I list here as I think that they raise serious problems for political literacy education and also for the new movements — in particular for World Studies. They are:

- (i) The procedural values of political literacy are themselves a value-package, an ideological job-lot — in short, they celebrated an idealization of western social democracy and practised an 'indoctrination of the Centre'. (Perhaps it was not just a coincidence that Bernard Crick once described himself as 'a militant of the Centre'.)
- (ii) Given the political nature of schools and teachers, and given the nature of the political culture of which they are both part, it is an impossible task to introduce an effective democratic education into schools. It would be too threatening to the political order of the schools and to the teaching and learning culture in them. The programme might introduce anodyne versions of itself into schools (perhaps by presenting political education as an exercise in moral reasoning). Democratic *values* and democratic action skills would be contentious areas. A programme that aimed at political education for all would find political literacy education excluded from most of the schools.
- (iii) Political literacy arose from theorizing (about the nature of politics and about the nature of education) and was

then bestowed, as a gift, from those above to those below (teachers and students) — i.e. it was an attempted 'top-down innovation'. It did not arise from sensitive and systematic observation of the three worlds it sought to relate — the world of politics (the political culture), the world of the school (school culture and classroom culture), and the world of young people (youth culture). There was the danger that, to the students, political literacy would be indistinguishable from several other 'curriculum reforms' which had been imposed upon them. What to teachers might seem like a radical change of methods (problem-solving group exercises and simulations, instead of oral exposition and frontal teaching) might seem to the pupils a continuation of the old system in which teachers determined the method and the moment. After an elaborate problem-solving group exercise, aimed to reveal the superiority of democracy over dictatorship and anarchy a pupil said of the teacher: 'She's always going on about democracy, isn't she?'

The achievements of the programme for political education were manifold. It demonstrated that courses following the political literacy approach were feasible, and the case-study research carried out by the programme's research team provided evidence, based on observed practice, for further argument. (Hitherto argument about political education had been trapped in a rhetorical debate, based on assertions and speculations, about courses that did not exist.) Political literacy gained official backing. Her Majesty's Inspectorate recommended it, in the form of 'political competence' in the publication *Curriculum: 11-16* (DES, 1977). The Sheffield Education Authority advertised for a political education advisor (and specified that it was political literacy education that they wanted). Other LEAs included political education in the responsibilities of their advisory service and several issued political education guidelines. A lectureship in political education was set up at the University of London Institute of Education and one of the programme's staff was appointed to it. Another lectureship was set up at Birmingham. London, Birmingham and York became universities where teachers could train for, and research in the field of, political education. In the view of Alan Reid (1984), who did case-study research on the programme itself, the main achievement of the programme was to gain legitimation for political literacy education.

It also achieved some actual implementation of political education in the schools. By the time that Robert Stradling and Michael Noctor reported the findings of their investigation into the provision of political education in schools — that is, by 1981 — over half of the schools in their national sample were offering their students some kind of direct political education. The concept of political literacy could also travel. It was advocated in India by J.P. Naik (1977) and it is part of major curriculum development projects in Australia.

New Movements in Political Education

If we look at the political education scene now it is clear that the dynamic comes not from the political literacy movement but from the new movements. Yesterday's vanguard are today's rearguard. The new movements include peace education; development education; multicultural education; human rights education and environmental education (of the ecological variety). World Studies seeks to embrace them all. Each of the new movements has some of its own peculiar characteristics. As a group they share a lot of common concerns (as well as some common membership).

Peace education has had two outstanding Scandinavian pioneers — Johan Galtung and Magnus Haavelsrud. Galtung was the founder of the International Peace Research Institute (IPRI) in Oslo, as far back as 1959, and gave peace education its important (but slippery) concepts of 'structural violence' and 'negative peace'⁵ and 'positive peace'. In England a School of Peace Studies was established at the University of Bradford, under Professor Adam Curle (an early 'development educator') and the students carried out some impressive practical projects (some in third world countries) as well as academic studies. In 1977 a Peace Studies Project was launched at Atlantic College (an international sixth-form college) in Wales, and in June 1981 an international conference on peace education was held at the College, with the conference papers being subsequently published as *Issues in Peace Education* (Reid, 1984). By that time peace education had become a matter of controversy and debate in Britain, in Europe and in Australia. It was when peace education came out of the élite institutions and was offered to majorities in mainstream schools that it became controversial.

Development education was encouraged by the Labour government during the period 1974–79. It concerns itself with questions of First World/Third World, North and South, rich and poor, White

and Black. A network of Development Education Centres now stretches across the country. Development educators have pioneered some of the best teaching materials and games and simulations available — *The Development Puzzle* (Fyson, 1979) is an outstanding example. Its general framework is both challenging and difficult to keep in place — moving as it does from development in the Third World, to how that can aid development in the First World, to how that might aid development in us as persons. Of all the new movements it is the one where the rhetoric can be furthest from the realities. Some teachers may view themselves as part of the human potential movement but other teachers are found saying: 'The pupils lack a concept of the size of the problems. They don't even know the location of the countries'.⁶

Multicultural education has, as a general notion, enjoyed high levels of firm support and has more LEA advisors devoted to it than any of the other new movements. It, too, has its controversies. The first government Commission on Multicultural Education, under Anthony Rampton, broke up in disarray, and was resumed under the chairmanship of Lord Swann. It has also had the Honeyford affair.

Human rights education has enjoyed high formal support from international organizations (such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe) and low levels of formal support from national governments. Until recently, it was characterized more by working papers than by practical developments. That has now changed — particularly with the publication of teachers' handbooks (Lister, 1984), the production of teaching materials,⁷ and the carrying out of some small-scale, but illuminating, research in the field (Cunningham, 1986).

Environmental education of the ecological variety is the latest of the new movements. The Germans have a name for it — 'Ökopädagogik' or 'ecology pedagogy' (Beer, 1984). One of the recent major sponsors of curriculum materials for schools is the World Wildlife Fund. If all the new movements have been affected by the alternative movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and if some seem to be offering schools 'a green curriculum', it is in this new area that 'the greening of the curriculum' is most explicit and apparent. What is offered is both a view of the world and guidelines for how to save it.

World Studies And Global Education

All these new movements are within the province of World Studies and of global educators — not because they are curriculum imperialists, as Roger Scruton alleges, but because they all reflect major international and supranational issues. When setting itself up, at York, in 1982, the World Studies Teacher Training Centre included the following in its 'statement of intent':

The World Studies Teacher Training Centre has been established to promote a global perspective within the British school curriculum. This it seeks to do through pre-service and in-service teacher training in World Studies and related fields (development education, human rights education, multicultural education and education for peace and international understanding).

In a briefing paper David Hicks (1986), one of the pioneers of the World Studies movement, links World Studies with the progressive movement (Dewey, Tagore, Abbotsholme and Bedales) and with the concerns of the Institute for World Order in New York — world order depends on four main values: peace, development, social justice and ecological balance. The twin stresses on human-centred education and global perspectives constitute a radical shift away from the dominant tradition of schooling (which is knowledge-centred and ethnocentric). Thus, the vanguard educators seek to give to education a new *process* and a new *perspective* on the world. The new movements have eight important features, all of which distinguish them from conventional social education and some of which distinguish them from political literacy education:

- (i) Knowledge should have a social purpose aimed to ameliorate the human condition. This means not only understanding the world but also changing it. Thus, key-works have titles like *Learning for Change in a World Society* (Richardson, 1979) and *Teaching Geography for a Better World* (Fien and Gerber, 1986). (In the traditional school knowledge was academic and disciplined and the ideal was that it was learned 'for its own sake'. Political literacy provides a political education for conserving, participating in and changing society — the conservative, liberal and radical dimensions of the con-

- cept — but, unlike the new movements, it does not assume that major change is urgently needed.)
- (ii) The curriculum should contain major issues — war and peace; poverty and development; human rights; and the challenges of multicultural societies and an interdependent world. (In the traditional school controversial questions and topics were avoided. Narrative accounts explained, and celebrated, the status quo. Political literacy also stresses the importance of issues and the programme for political education maintained that political education should be issues-based.)
 - (iii) Learning should include the learning of skills (and not just content). Here the critiques of conventional schooling made by political educators, the new movements, and the Manpower Services Commission coincide.
 - (iv) In order to acquire and develop skills, learning needs an action-dimension. Both political literacy and the new movements insist on the use of new forms of teaching and learning — such as games and simulations. (Traditional classrooms are characterized by expository teaching, textbooks and written exercises — with information going from teacher to pupil to rough-book to best-book and back to teacher again — Freire's 'banking education', which suffers from 'narration sickness'.)
 - (v) Education must be affective as well as cognitive. The vanguard educators are very interested in attitudes, values and sensitivities and they use role play and socio-drama for affective purposes. Indeed, they claim that the cognitive and the affective (and the right-brain and left-brain, and the Yin and the Yang) are out of balance in the modern world. Traditional schooling stressed cognitive knowledge. Political literacy appeals to reason and reasoning (and not to emotion). Here the vanguard educators are reminiscent of those Leavisite English teachers of the 1950s and 1960s whom Margaret Mathieson (1975) described as 'preachers'. This is one of the areas in which the new movements appear more religious than secular.
 - (vi) The new movements recognize pluralism and diversity. (Traditional schooling educated for uniformity. Political literacy tried to establish a framework within which

diversity could flourish. The new movements present societies as multicultural and diverse. Global educators are interested in how others see the world, in perspective consciousness, in trying to understand other cultures 'from the inside', in 'seeing it their way'.)

- (vii) The curriculum should have international and global perspectives. (In England the traditional curriculum was Anglocentric.) The programme for political education argued that the political issues in the curriculum should include local, national and international issues, but it did not use the formulation 'global issues'.
- (viii) Education should have a future perspective.⁸ (The traditional school curriculum was past-oriented. In history syllabuses rarely reached the present-day. The programme for political education was interested in issues related to 'alternative futures' but its research team found no evidence of them being discussed in school.)

Controversies and Debates

With all these radical challenges to traditional schooling it is little wonder that the new movements have become the subject of a major public controversy. However, there are two debates — the debates of the public controversy (where World Studies is Scrutoned (Scruton, 1985) and Scruton is scrutinized by World Studies (Selby and Pike, 1986)) and the internal debate, among social educators. I will deal with them in turn.

The public controversy has seen an attack on peace studies and peace education made by new Right critics. In 1982 Digby Anderson suggested that the inclusion of peace studies in the curriculum was the sign of a bad school. In 1984 John Marks claimed that peace studies were propaganda for defencelessness. He argued that 'lessons or courses labelled "peace studies" should find no place in schools', that 'politically contentious subjects should normally form no part of the curriculum for pupils below the age of 16'; and he recommended that 'public funding should be withdrawn from organizations promoting "peace studies" or "peace education"'.

Also in 1984 Caroline Cox and Roger Scruton produced *Peace Studies: A Critical Survey*. This argued that 'the movement for peace studies in schools is part of a trend towards the politicization of education, involving both a lowering of intellectual standards and

assumption of foregone political conclusions.' Their general verdict was:

In sum, we do not believe that the introduction of peace studies into schools is politically innocuous. It is all too often not an educational exercise but an exercise in political propaganda. Its 'innocuous' facade is no more than a facade, behind which a serious political campaign seems to be being prosecuted. This is often aimed at implanting unilateralist sentiment in the minds of people young enough to receive it uncritically . . .

(In Australia the attack on peace studies includes a work by Jacobs (1985) called *Operation Peace Studies: War in the Classroom* which argues that: 'Peace studies promotes, both wittingly and unwittingly, the Soviet Union's foreign policy and strategic propaganda objectives: peace is defined in terms of Soviet demands and Soviet definitions'. In 1985 Roger Scruton, Angela Ellis-Jones and Dennis O'Keeffe produced *Education and Indoctrination*. For them features of indoctrination included the dominance of subject and method by foregone conclusions; the assimilation of those conclusions to a programme of action; and the closing of the mind to argument, evidence and alternatives. They refer to World Studies as 'the new, highly politicized subject of "World Studies"'. They make the policy recommendation that legislation should be introduced to deal with the problem of political indoctrination in schools, and they suggest some possible clauses for an Act. They include:

- (i) It shall be the duty of the Local Education Authority to provide an education that does not seek to indoctrinate.
- (ii) It shall be an implied term of teachers' contracts of employment . . . that (they) shall not attempt to indoctrinate any pupil in (their) charge. Breach of this term will render the teacher liable to dismissal by the Local Education Authority.

Also in 1985 Roger Scruton produced *World Studies: Education or Indoctrination?* a critique focused on World Studies and, even more, on development education, both of which are viewed as preaching propaganda for a cause — 'the cause of "Third Worldism"'. Scruton writes: 'World Studies grew out of a variety of educational developments in the United States and is . . . closely associated with — and probably indistinguishable from — development education and peace studies'. 'World Studies is less a subject than an impetuous

rush to impose upon children the "global perspective" which — until recently, it is supposed — has been absent from their studies'. Two major criticisms made are that 'by its very nature, World Studies is extremely unlikely to be taught in a manner that encourages the pupil to see the other side of the argument — or rather, the many other sides of the argument — to which the Third Worldist has closed his mind', and that World Studies has 'an imperialistic nature' and 'seek ultimately to take over every area of the curriculum'. The movement seeks 'to replace serious knowledge and formal scholarship with political posturing and infantile, manipulative games'.

For Scruton the proponents of World Studies appear to be part of 'the Left-wing educational establishment'. For some others, within the new movements, they appear as wishy-washy liberals. In an article in 1983 Richard Hatcher asserts: 'Capitalism is taken for granted as the framework of world development that World Studies adopts'. Of David Hicks he writes: 'The most striking thing about his analysis is that it doesn't once mention capitalism . . .'. Scruton *et al* (1985) repeatedly make a different complaint — that the new educators don't mention the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Thus, curiously, they are accused — by different people — of being apologists for capitalism and apologists for communism. However, it is not that ideological debate but the debate among the social educators that I wish to pursue here. What is the relationship between the new movements and the political literacy tradition and how might it be positively productive? For the longer term this is the most important question.

In the short term the public debate had held up the progress of political education in the country. Damage was done with the identification of peace studies with particular local education authorities (usually nuclear-free-zone authorities); and by some of the techniques employed by opponents of the new movements — especially by the technique of appealing to fear and alarm, and of the use threats — of closure of agencies and dismissal of individuals. All this took the argument back into a rhetorical debate (back to assertions and counter-assertions). What was lacking was a search for good practice and evidence based on the observation of practice and interviews with practitioners — planners, teachers and students. The period did produce a search for guidelines for fair teaching and learning in classrooms. It also saw the failure of writers like Cox, Marks and Scruton to win over the Minister of Education to their extreme positions.⁹ At the same time more and more teachers, and a

great range of authorities, have come to accept the need to educate for pluralism — for multicultural societies and for an interdependent world.

The argument for having global perspectives in the school curriculum has been accepted by social educators. Other important achievements of the new movements include the practice of new forms of teaching and learning and the successful training of teachers to use them; the production of some first-class teaching materials and some excellent teachers' handbooks. The way in which the vanguard educators have worked with primary as well as secondary school children has challenged social educators to rethink the social studies curriculum. The limitations of the new movements have been a tendency to ignore questions of content — the degradation of content — and to overstress process-based teaching and learning (without evaluating it). The dangers include being 'process-rich and content-poor'; of making life in the classroom 'one damned simulation after another'; and of producing handbooks which, as one teacher described to me, are 'a grab-bag of pastoral care activities'. Sometimes the strengths of social commitment run over into being a kind of latter-day religious movement (with devotees talking about 'when I became global' as a moment of conversion). The new movements have within them some individuals who know the truth, who are evangelical, and who do the cause more harm than good. The new movements have been weak in dealing with these people and they have been weak in trying to sort out good practice from bad. A strength of the programme of political education was its practicality, pragmatism and political sense. It recognized that the great riddles of educational reform lie in practice and not in theory, and that, just as an acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia, six case-study schools, actually attempting to put political literacy into practice, was better than twenty working papers in a network's resource bank. The main successes of political literacy were to achieve legitimation for political education in schools attended by the majority of the population; to establish a procedural framework which made political education acceptable; and to develop methods of handling controversial political issues in the classroom which did not involve the teacher becoming a neutral chairman.

Conclusion

The way ahead lies with a coalition of political educators and vanguard educators of the new movements. There is still a need for them to agree, among themselves, a coherent and feasible programme. There is a general need for the reconstruction of the social studies, as a whole. Political educators and vanguard educators have set challenges for each other. If they can overcome their own limitations (and their own-egocentrisms) we will be able to educate for humanity — which will be to educate for our globalities as well as for our localities, and to educate for the future, as well as for the present. The historic mission is to realign school education with a changed, and changing, world. It is this which causes both the pain, and the hope, of the enterprise.

Notes

- 1 See also GOLLANCZ, V. and SOMERVELL, D. (1919) *The School and the World*, London, Chapman and Hall.
- 2 SINHA, R. (1980) *The New Education Fellowship*, York, University of York Department of Education.
- 3 LEFTWICH, A. (1983) *Redefining Politics*, London, Methuen.
- 4 ALLEN, G. and LISTER, I. (1974) *Draft Report of the Political Education Research Unit*, York, University of York.
- 5 GALTUNG, J. (1975) *Strukturelle Gewalt* (Structural Violence), Hamburg, Rowohlt.
- 6 DYSON, J. (1986) *Development Education in Theory and Practice*, York, University of York, MA thesis.
- 7 See the Education Project of Amnesty International, British Division, and the Human Rights Project of the Australian Human Rights Commission.
- 8 HAAVELSRUD, M. (1983) 'Thinking about the future at school', *Prospects* XIII, 1.
- 9 HOUSE OF LORDS (1986) *Extracts from the Debate on Education: Avoidance of Politicization*, London, Hansard. The Earl of Swinton made it clear that government policy was to issue guidelines for the handling of controversial issue in schools, and not to ban them. 'The education service has a long and honourable tradition of upholding the principles of a free and open society.'

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Politics at 'A' Level

Eric Magee

Introduction

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the teaching and examining of Politics at 'A' level began to change. The traditional 'British Constitution' approach with its emphasis on government, institutions, constitutions and states, was modified to incorporate the behavioural approach, with its emphasis on actual political behaviour and informal political processes. This chapter reviews the syllabuses and examinations of the seven English and Welsh Boards offering 'A' level examinations in Politics which emerged as a result of this change, highlighting the similarities, differences and problems associated with each. It also considers new developments in the second half of the 1980s which will shape the teaching and examining of the subject at 'A' level into the 1990s.

The London Board: The Pacemaker

The London Board introduced its new syllabus entitled 'Government and Political Studies' in 1976 and it was first examined in 1978. It offers a compulsory paper 1, the syllabus for which combines an understanding of the main institutional features of British government with a study of political concepts. A second paper is chosen from a list of options, the first of which is 'Modern British politics', focusing on such issues as incomes policy, industrial relations, housing policy and immigration and race relations, to be studied from a contemporary history perspective, and combined with a general study of the nature of the political system. The second option is 'Modern political ideas and doctrines', but a

knowledge of political philosophy is not required. What is required is a knowledge of political doctrines (for example, conservatism, liberalism, communism and socialism) and the main concepts which relate to them: totalitarianism, autocracy and democracy, and the role in these doctrines of explanatory concepts such as participation, pluralism, ideology, tradition and class. A third option is 'Public administration', which is based on the government of the United Kingdom and emphasizes the current practices and problems while also stressing that candidates will be expected to be aware of the main outlines of the development of public administration in Britain. Option four is 'Comparative government', involving a study of key aspects of the functions of the political system and their interrelationship in one of five countries (Germany, France, China, the USA or the USSR), and calling for either comparison or analysis of the functions of government in two or more countries, one of which may be the United Kingdom.

The assessment pattern in all five papers involves a combination of short-answer questions and essays. In papers 1-4, ten out of twelve short answers are to be attempted in a compulsory first question, followed by three traditional essays from a choice of nine. In paper 5 (Comparative government), part A requires two essays to be answered from a choice of six and part B consists of five sections, one on each of the five countries specified in the syllabus, with candidates required to answer from one section, which requires four short answers from a choice of six, and one essay from a choice of four. The aim of combining short answers with essays is to test full coverage of the syllabus while at the same time developing the skill of writing concisely and precisely in the short answers as well as at more length, and in greater depth, in the essays.

This was, and is, an attractive package. It marks a clear break with the traditional 'British Constitution' approach in its emphasis on concepts and political issues, while the optional papers reflect the main academic branches of the subject. Compulsory short-answer questions offer an alternative, and complementary, mode of assessment alongside the traditional essay. However, after ten years, it seems appropriate to review this syllabus and examination in the light of experience and current developments in education. First, it is possible to study only British politics, and a majority of candidates do so by combining the 'Modern British politics' option with the compulsory paper 1. This Board is not alone in this respect but it could be argued that to prevent complacency about our own system of government and to enable us to assess its effectiveness, the

study of at least one other country ought to be compulsory. Second, there is some overlap in content between paper 2 (Modern British politics) and paper 1 (Political institutions and concepts). To some extent the two equal one-and-a-half papers, and this may place those choosing other options at a disadvantage. Third, in the context of GCSE, with its emphasis on course work and other techniques that attempt to assess skills as well as knowledge, six hours of short answers and traditional essays may appear rather outmoded.

The AEB: The Other Pacemaker

In 1976 the Board offered a completely new syllabus involving the study of political behaviour (largely based on Britain) and of political institutions, requiring a comparison between Britain and one other country (to be chosen from the USA, USSR, or France). This was innovative in that a comparative approach was compulsory. Innovation also occurred in the examination, with the introduction in paper 1 of two new types of question of which one had to be chosen. One question was based on the candidate's observation of the political behaviour of a social group, a local pressure group, for example, while the second required interpretation of statistical or other data. Unfortunately, the combination of a compulsory comparative element and the new types of questions seems to have been too much for teachers. Entries for the examination fell and, in 1986, a new syllabus was examined for the first time (see Table 1).

Table 1: Candidates Entered for A Level Politics 1978–1983¹

	1978 ²	1979 ²	1980	1981	1982	1983
AEB ³	2760	1435	1295	1230	1027	1041
Cambridge	52	98	102	201	164	220
JMB	1688	1851	1904	1869	1966	2156
London	2456	2826	2934	3039	3287	3410
N. Ireland	138	168	181	161	222	292
Oxford ⁴	797	854	961	1028	1068	1007
Oxford and Cambridge	258	251	285	260	306	273
Welsh	437	415	366	352	380	378
Totals	8586	7990	8028	8140	8420	8847

Notes

1. The boards were asked for information on summer entries only. AEB, JMB and London made clear in their replies that the information *was* for summer entries only. For the rest, it can be safely assumed that they do not run a second examination.
2. Figures from the original article by Berridge (*Grass Roots*, 24 September 1980).
3. Home candidates only. The AEB's overseas entry has, with the exception of 1981, continued to fall from ninety-two in 1979 to sixty-nine in 1983.
4. This figure excludes entries in 'Economics and Political Studies' which have regularly been three times as large as entries in Political Studies alone. Entries for EPA have risen slowly from a low point of 727 in 1980 to 800 in 1983. (Source: Prout G. *Grass Roots* — Newsletter of the Politics Association 35, Spring 1984.)

The new syllabus focuses on four themes — representation, decision-making, political culture, participation. The major institutions, processes, relationships and concepts are generated out of these themes. At first sight it appears exciting and innovative (and compared to some other boards it is) but on closer inspection it becomes clear that it represents a retreat. First, the compulsory comparative element has gone, relegated to an option. Paper 1 is confined to the UK and paper 2 may be either a paper confined to the UK or a paper involving the study of the UK and USA. Second, the new types of questions have been removed, the entire syllabus now being tested by eight essays in two three-hour papers.

The Other Boards

The most striking feature of the remaining syllabuses and examinations is their uniformity, particularly their UK focus and reliance on the traditional essay. They all introduced revised syllabuses and examinations in the 1970s, with new titles which, to some extent, belie a traditional approach to both content and questions. However, there are sufficient differences to merit individual comment.

There is some discrepancy between the JMB syllabus and its examination papers in that the syllabus is, in many respects, institutional and traditional in its approach (not markedly different from the old 'British Constitution' syllabuses) whereas the examination questions require some understanding of political processes and political culture, some knowledge of the programmes of parties

and, even where institutional questions are set, they focus on current problems and controversies. However, this is the only board which splits British government into two papers without even a comparative option.

The Cambridge Board's syllabus and examination consists of a compulsory paper on British politics and a second paper on either the USA or the USSR, both papers requiring an understanding of the nature of politics and political processes, and the ability to relate these to the economic and social background, the political culture, institutions and practices of the countries concerned. However, the detailed specification of the syllabus is heavily institutional although the examination questions are less so. Only one question out of twelve on the USA and the USSR requires comparisons with Britain. Nevertheless this syllabus and examination at least has the merit of requiring the study of another country.

The syllabus of the Oxford Board consists of a compulsory paper 1 (British government and politics today) and paper 2 to be chosen from three options: British constitutional history since 1820; American government and politics; and Political theory. A combination of paper 1 and the American government and politics option would make a good course, particularly since many of the questions focus on political behaviour and require a knowledge of current developments in both countries. In addition, three out of twelve essay questions in the American paper require a comparison between Britain and the USA. There are, nevertheless, some problems concerning the other optional papers. First, the Political theory paper requires, unlike the London Board's paper, an understanding of political philosophy which is very difficult for most candidates at this level. Second, the retention of a paper on constitutional history since 1830 in an 'A' level Politics syllabus, in spite of the debates of the late 1960s and 1970s, is beyond comprehension.

Oxford and Cambridge offer three papers of which any two may be chosen. They are: Political thought; Representative government; and British constitutional history since 1830. The reservations already expressed concerning the Oxford Board's papers on political theory and constitutional history apply equally to the similar papers in this syllabus. This leaves the Representative government paper to be considered. It requires a knowledge of British government and either American or French government. Initially this suggests a comparative element but the examination paper is divided into three sections, one on each of the three

countries, and candidates have to select two questions from section A (Britain) and two from either section B (American) or section C (France). Only one out of six questions in each of sections A and B requires a comparison between Britain and either the USA or France.

New Developments

London, Wales and the JMB have recently completed revisions of their syllabuses and these will be examined for the first time from 1987 onwards.

Revision of the London syllabus is minor. The problem of overlap between papers 1 and 2, referred to earlier in this chapter, has been resolved by making questions on the nature of parties, pressure groups and the political system part of paper 1, and making paper 2 focus on specific issues in post-war and contemporary Britain. Some issues have been dropped (housing policy and the reorganization of secondary education) and new ones added (women's rights, defence, the powers of local government and constitutional and electoral reform). Minor amendments to paper 3 involve the addition of new topics such as 'Feminism'. Paper 5 becomes paper 6 and a new paper 5, 'International politics', has been introduced. The examination format, involving short-answer questions and essays, remains unchanged and the revised syllabuses will be examined for the first time in June 1989.

While a revision of the syllabus to take account of developments in the subject and iron out problems within the existing syllabus, particularly the overlap between papers 1 and 2, is welcome, such a revision, taking place as it did while GCSEs were being developed, offered an opportunity to introduce different types of questions, such as the use of stimulus material or questions based on the interpretation of statistical data, in addition to short-answer questions and essays. Course work in the form of one extended, or several shorter pieces of work, might also have been offered. Their absence suggests a missed opportunity.

When this revised syllabus is placed alongside the new JMB syllabus (discussed below) it is difficult to escape the conclusion that if London wishes to remain in the vanguard of Politics examining at 'A' level this can only be an interim change with a more thorough revision, particularly in the area of examination structure, to be undertaken sooner rather than later.

The Welsh Board, rather belatedly, has undertaken a major revision of its syllabus and examination, at last moving away from its 'British Constitution' syllabus (examined for the last time in 1986) to a new one entitled 'Politics and Government'. A compulsory paper A1, 'Political institutions and concepts' is combined with either paper A2, 'The governments of the USA and the USSR', or paper A3, 'Public administration'.

The similarities between this syllabus and examination and that of the London Board are striking: a compulsory paper focusing on institutions and concepts, optional papers (although only two) and the use of short-answer questions and essays in the examination.

However, as distinct from London, questions based on source material are included in all three papers. Also, in paper A2 candidates must answer one essay question based on a comparison between the political systems of the USA and the USSR. The most disappointing feature of the new syllabus is the inclusion of paper A3 on 'Public administration' in that those candidates who opt for it will again be studying politics from a totally British perspective and, as with the unrevised London syllabus, appear to have an advantage over those who study paper A2 in that it could be argued that a combination of papers A1 and A3 equal one-and-a-half papers. It will be interesting to see if most candidates opt for a combination of papers A1 and A3 in the same way that most opt for papers 1 and 2 of the London Board.

The JMB has undertaken a major revision of its syllabus and examination producing both a new syllabus and a new examination format. The syllabus is in three parts. Part 1, the Common Core, is divided into four sections: The context of politics in Britain; Representation and participation in theory and practice; The machinery of government; Change and reform. Part 2, Issue areas in contemporary British politics, specifies five topics: Law and order and civil liberties; Education, health and welfare; Management of the economy; The politics of equality — race and gender; Northern Ireland. Part 3, Optional studies, offers two options: Local government and politics in England and Wales; the Elections and electoral behaviour.

The examination consists of two papers each of three hours. However, in place of two questions on optional studies in paper 2, candidates may offer a personal study. Candidates offering a personal study take a shortened examination of ninety minutes. Paper 1 examines Part 1 of the syllabus (the common core). It consists of a compulsory first question based on stimulus material and three

essays to be chosen from nine. Paper 2 is divided into two sections. Section A examines part 2 of the syllabus (issues). Five questions are set, one on each issue, and two are to be answered in ninety minutes. Section B examines Part 3 of the syllabus (optional studies). Two questions are to be answered, also in ninety minutes, on one optional study. Question 1, based on stimulus material, is compulsory and the second is an essay from a choice of four. The personal study, in place of section B of paper 2, is to be of about 5000-6000 words and should be drawn from one of four areas: a content analysis of selected political issues in up to three local or national newspapers or journals; the political activities of a local, or a part of a larger national organization; an issue area or political campaign; another topic from the syllabus that is agreeable to the Board.

This syllabus and examination, however, has some defects. First, the Common Core is, to some extent, the old syllabus condensed into one paper and the final section, Change and reform, is not really a separate section, rather the context within which the Common Core as a whole ought to be studied. Second, only two of the five specified issues need be studied and yet all five are important issues which students ought to know about. Third, the topics chosen for optional studies are already covered in the Common Core. Although this is recognized, and it is stressed that a more detailed knowledge and a greater depth of understanding will be required, it is rather a pity that there should be repetition in what is already a very full syllabus. The personal study may replace the optional study and there is the possibility that repetition is used so that those opting for the personal study will not miss anything important from the syllabus. However, the problem of repetition remains for those not opting for a personal study. Fourth, the new syllabus, like the old, is confined to British politics. The study of another country, or some comparative element, as Part 3 of the syllabus instead of optional studies, would have avoided the repetition referred to earlier, but, of course, if it were to be an alternative to the personal study it could still be avoided. On the other hand, if the personal study were an alternative to Part 2 of the syllabus then the study of another country, or some comparative element, could not be avoided. Finally, there is the overall impression that too much has been compressed into the syllabus and examination. A compulsory paper 1 and a second from, say, two optional papers, might have overcome this problem.

However, the revised syllabus and examination has merits as

well as defects. First, the introduction of compulsory questions based on stimulus material is a welcome alternative mode of assessment alongside the traditional essay. Second, the possibility of undertaking a personal study is also welcome, particularly bearing in mind the fact that students will be studying for this examination after having taken GCSE with its emphasis on course work. Overall, and despite the defects outlined above, this revision represents a genuine attempt to rethink both syllabus and examination format with the students of the 1990s in mind.

Conclusion

The syllabus and examination structures described in this chapter vary considerably and there is clearly no accepted view of what should be taught and examined. For this reason it might be worth assessing them by asking two practical questions: do they meet the needs of teachers and students at 'A' level and are they sufficiently stimulating to engage the interest and commitment of both teachers and students? In answering these questions the syllabuses and examinations fall into three distinct categories. First, there are those syllabuses which do not produce a positive answer to both questions. In this category come both the Oxford and the Oxford and Cambridge syllabuses, largely because of the optional papers on constitutional history and political theory but also because of the institutional specification of the subject in their syllabuses. Both of these syllabuses are due for revision to meet the needs of students and teachers in the 1990s. Second, there are those syllabuses to which the answer is 'yes' but with reservations. In this category come the Cambridge and Welsh Board. The reservation in relation to Cambridge is that the specification of the syllabus is still heavily institutional and that in relation to the Welsh Board is that, while the public administration paper may meet the needs of certain teachers, it will not be sufficiently stimulating to engage the interest and commitment of students. Finally, there are those syllabuses to which the answer to both questions is an unequivocal 'yes'. In their different ways the syllabuses and examinations of London, AEB and JMB meet fully the criteria laid down in the two questions.

It is clear from what has been written in this chapter that there is much room for improvement in the syllabuses and examinations under offer at 'A' level. However, much good work has been done, especially by London, AEB and JMB, and, if their example is

followed by the other boards, particularly that of the JMB with regard to assessment, the prospects for the subject at 'A' level in the 1990s are good.

Appendix

The names and addresses of the examining boards are:

The Associated Examining Board, Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 5XJ Examination: Government and Politics	Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations, Ewert Place, Summertown, Oxford, OX2 7BZ. Examination: Political Studies
University of Cambridge, Local Examinations Syndicate, Syndicate Buildings, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU. Examination: Politics and Government	Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board Cambridge Office, 10 Trumpington Street, Cambridge, CB2 1QB. Oxford Office, Elsfield Way, Oxford, OX2 8EP. Examination: Political Studies
Joint Matriculation Board, Manchester, M15 6EU. Examination: British Government and Politics	Welsh Joint Education Committee, 245 Western Avenue, Cardiff, CF5 2YX. Examination: Politics and Government
University of London School Examinations Board, Stewart House, 32 Russell Square, London, WC1B 5DN Examination: Government and Political Studies	

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Non-Formal Political Education with Young People in Youth Work

Mark Smith

Introduction

Many of the debates surrounding political education have been rooted in the experience of formal educational institutions, yet there are strong traditions of activity directed at political learning that have little to do with schooling or further and higher education which has formed a thread of radical political activity and is evidenced in the concerns of Chartists and Owenites (Johnson, 1979). It is part of the self-learning activities undertaken by adults (Brookfield, 1983); and it can be seen in much of the activity directed at troublesome, and not so troublesome, youth. Given the pervasiveness of these forms and the extent to which their practice addresses some of the dilemmas experienced by educators within the formal sector, attention has to be given to this area of activity.

This chapter explores the nature of non-formal political education practice within one arena — youth work. In what follows I have made a distinction between informal and non-formal education, where the former is concerned with lifelong learning from daily experience and the educative influences in the individual's environment. Non-formal education is thus 'any organized educational activity outside the established formal system — whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity — that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives' (Coombs *et al*, 1973).

The History of Political Education Within Youth Work

The political education of young people has always been a significant concern of those sponsoring youth work. Milson (1980) has described the nature of the political element in youth service in the nineteenth and early twentieth century as casting young people for a passive role in the political system: 'good citizenship' was the aim constantly repeated but it meant conformity to existing middle class mores and structures (p. 13). Three key nationalist strands link early male youth organizations in particular (Blanch, 1979). First, the idea of *national efficiency* can be seen in the drive to mental and physical fitness, rooted in drill and discipline. Second, the idea of *model authority* was reflected in the ordered structures of these organizations. The system of authority by ranks and levels was seen by the proponents as providing a model for social organization and leadership. Last, there was the threat of the *enemy outside*, 'Outside Britain there lay a hostile force, bent on mischief' (p. 119). Much of the early work for girls and young women was directed towards reinforcing the emerging Victorian ideology of the family and preparing young women for their role as home makers (Dyhouse, 1981). The leadership roles they were expected to occupy were those seen as 'suitable' for women.

Whilst a great deal of the work may have been to buttress middle class power and salve conscience, there are examples of provision for young people from this period that took the debate beyond what might be suggested here. For example, much of the early work of the National Organization of Girls Clubs and its founders was concerned with lobbying for, and educating about, wage levels and factory conditions for girls. Girls were encouraged to take limited action themselves (Bunt and Gargrave, 1980; Bunt, 1975). Outside the boundaries of what the middle class defined as 'youth work', there are examples of radical practice (Smith, forthcoming). For instance the Clarion Scouts, founded by Robert Blatchford in 1894, as groupings of young socialist pioneers, claimed to have 120 clubs with 7000 members by 1896. They set up Clarion Youth Houses, forerunners of the youth hostels, and carried the socialist message from town to town on cycles (Simon, 1965).

Here we can begin to see some of the traditions that have informed the development of youth work and a hint of the ideological strains that can occur. With the rise of youth movements in Nazi Germany, many youth organizations began to proclaim

themselves 'non-political' by which was meant non-party political. However, their programmes frequently expressed concerns about 'citizenship'. Indeed the development of the Association for Education in Citizenship in the 1930s found a number of supporters within the youth work field (for example, Brew, 1943; Edwards-Rees, 1943). Not unexpectedly the ebb and flow of concern about the political education and socialization of the young within youth work runs in tandem with developments within formal education. Thus key figures in the social studies movement in the 1940s such as James Hemmings were given a ready platform within organizations such as the National Association of Mixed Clubs and Girls Clubs (later to become the National Association of Youth Clubs).

In 1969 the Youth Service Development Council called for work directed at 'the critical involvement of young people in their society'. It saw the youth and community service providing many opportunities for young people to discuss matters of controversy and to share in the formation of public opinion (DES, 1969). The report specifically endorsed political education and called for a level of partnership with political youth groups (para 212). Such recommendations have to be seen in the context of the growing concern about participation in policy formation, perhaps best expressed in the publication of the Skeffington Report (MHLG, 1969) and of the ideas and responses to the student unrest of 1968.

Similarly, the moral panic surrounding National Front activity provided a major impetus in 1978 to the DES granting substantial amounts of money to short term political education projects sponsored by the NAYC and the British Youth Council. These organizations used the Hansard Society's Programme for Political Education (Crick and Porter, 1978) to provide part of the rationale for their proposals.

Submissions prepared by the NAYC (1981b and 1981c) were to provide much of the material for the most recent national statement concerning political education within youth work:

Political education is not the same thing as political studies or civics though it may contain some elements of civics. Much of the political education in schools or even within the Youth Service has this passive character. It is not enough. What is required is experience of such a kind that the young people learn to claim their right to influence the society in which they live and to have a say in how it is run. It is active

participation in some form of political activity, formal or informal, which really counts. . . .

The youth service has the potential to fulfil a much needed and vital role not only as a forum for the theory of political education but also as a scene of political activity addressed to issues which are of concern to young people. Through the internal machinery of their youth clubs or centres, through the scope offered by various forms of youth council in the locality, through participation in local or national issues, the service can offer young people a real opportunity to express their views in the relatively 'safe' context appropriate to the inexperience of those taking part. (HMSO, 1982, paras 5.37 and 5.39).

The report recommends that political education should be a normal part of the youth service curriculum, pursued in such ways as to involve active participation. The inclusion of such a recommendation has meant that a number of organizations and local authorities have felt obliged to include something about political education in any policy statements that they may have. The report has also encouraged some reflection by workers (see, for example, Chandler and Hill, 1984). However, the reality of practice remains varied and the experience of action-based approaches, which the report so warmly endorses, provides rich ground for reflection.

The Nature of Contemporary Practice

The vast majority of units and projects are either not prepared to recognize or own up to the political dimensions of their work, or are unable to implement specific political education initiatives. A sample survey of units in the largest non-uniformed organization found that only 5 per cent of the 7000 units could be said to be making some conscious and acknowledged provision of political education (NAYC, 1981a). However, an interrogation of much of the content of Scouting and Guiding, for example, would show a considerable political education effort. The labels attached to such activity are varied but can be expressed in concerns such as leadership, citizenship and patriotism. In many respects this apparent discrepancy flows from the way in which workers within different traditions of youth work define the political. In order to explore contemporary practice it is necessary to have a working definition of

political education and here it is taken to be the conscious process by which people individually or collectively develop the knowledge, skills and feelings necessary to understand and act upon the institutions and processes that significantly affect society or a substantial part of it. I take 'society' to mean a tribe, a nation state or an empire and 'institution' a group of people organized for a specific purpose or purposes.

Using this definition, a number of key themes and forms of organization coalesce into seven reasonably consistent approaches (Smith, 1986). It is possible to make an initial distinction between these different approaches on the basis of the pattern of learning that is emphasized. Some practice expresses a pattern which approximates to information assimilation and other practice one which approximates to experiential or action-based learning (Coleman, 1976). The three approaches which broadly follow the former pattern could be characterized as follows:

Civics — where the concern is to develop the understanding of, commitment to and ability to use the established political system and in particular those institutions directly connected with representative government. Typical examples of practice would include short programmes of talks, sessions to develop basic system skills such as debating and day-to-day interventions by the worker in meetings of say a youth committee designed at improving their working knowledge of the civic system (for example, Brew, 1943; Milson, 1979).

Issues — which aims to increase people's understanding and valuing of specific political issues. In many respects this is perhaps the most common approach and can be found in the creation of club and project environments that stimulate discussion — for instance through the use of posters, the wearing of badges, the provision of newspapers and the intervention of workers in an informal and discursive context such as a coffee bar. It may involve the organization of specific events and meetings on, for instance, nuclear power or racism (see, for example, Ritchie and Marken, 1984; Masterson, 1982; Wild, 1982).

Socio-historic — where the aim is to develop people's appreciation of themselves as black/female/working class and the historic and socio-economic dimension of that experience. Here examples include the provision of series of lectures for instance on Black History, informal and often anecdotal discussion and the encouragement of people to undertake relevant courses in formal educational institutions (Yarnit, 1980; St Phillip's Project 1983).

Three approaches could be described as broadly action-based or experiential:

Leadership — where the central aims would appear to be the development of an identity with key institutions both within the associated social movement and outside it, and the encouragement of particular skills and character attributes connected with 'leadership'. This approach commonly uses a formal organization with a hierarchy of roles. Participants then move through these roles if they have 'leadership potential'. Perhaps the most obvious examples here are Scouting and Guiding with their structure of roles and activities, but examples can be found in club work (Springhall *et al*, 1983; Eagar, 1953).

Participation — here two strands were seen as important — the structuring of organizations so as to improve the extent to which people could contribute towards policy making and the fostering of particular skills and attitudes in order that they can do so. It may be expressed in the use of club meetings, youth committees and open forums where decisions about certain aspects of the organization's operation are made, in training events designed to develop particular competencies and through work with individuals or groups on a day-to-day basis (Youth Service Forum, 1978; Long, 1979-83; Burley, 1982).

Collective action — which focused on the development of both individual and collective sense of worth and the gaining of the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to organize. Often there will be a concern to develop in people an identity with particular social movements. Workers may help young people to gain the necessary competencies to organize specific campaigns and provision for themselves, provide administrative and other back-up to their efforts or run conferences and similar events concerning particular aspects of their activities, for example on local government finance (Taylor and Ratcliffe, 1981; Baldwin *et al*, 1982).

Finally the seventh approach is perhaps best thought of as largely action-based although in some instances it could approximate to the information assimilation pattern:

Cultural interrogation — where the aim is to increase people's understanding of the cultural forms they experience, their appreciation of class/gender/ethnicity as dynamic factors in the shaping of their experiences and their ability to make choices about their 'whole way of life'. Here the writing of autobiographies may be used to help people reflect upon the values and behaviours they have

taken on and the forces that helped their adoption, sessions to discuss experiences and involvement in cultural forms along with an exploration of how these forms express ideas about, say, gender and ethnicity (Cohen, 1982; Cohen, 1984; Carpenter and Young, 1986).

There is a peculiar combination of ideas and practices associated with each of the approaches. It is this combination rather than the ideas and practices in themselves that has led to the naming of these approaches and indeed in the use of the loose term 'approaches'. We find broadly similar practices and themes arising in a number of them. In this way there is a certain amount of overlap as one approach merges into another.

In what remains of this chapter I want to discuss some key questions that arise from a consideration of these approaches. These include the importance of ideology, the experience of action-based approaches and difficulties concerning reflection and theory making.

Ideology, the Definition of Politics and Debates about Practice

The civics and leadership approaches could be said to feature what Leftwich has labelled as an arena definition of politics (Leftwich, 1984). Thus politics and personal life are quite separate from one another. Politics is about what happens to nations and the operation of certain forums; personal life is what happens each day to individuals. In the 'participation' and 'issues' approaches this same conception of politics may remain. There may be argument about what institutions constitute the arena, with those adopting a more conservative position attempting to define certain issues out of the political arena and confine them to managerial or administrative domains. However, somewhere within these two approaches there is a transition or break into a process definition of politics. That is to say, where politics is not seen to be a separate realm of public life and activity, but rather a generalized process in human societies. Such a conception may be seen within a number of the examples given within the 'cultural interrogation', 'socio-historic' and 'collective action' approaches. However, as we move through these we may find definitions of politics that collapse its meaning to such a degree as to make it coterminous with the whole range of social relations or that present politics as a highly determined or conditional activity which grows directly out of the relationships of production.

As can be seen, these conceptions of politics will tend to grow from or connect with particular ideological perspectives. For example, a vulgar Marxism would yield the latter, highly deterministic view of politics (Miliband, 1977). Arguments about political education have to be considered with reference to the particular definition of politics protagonists utilize and the view of the world these reflect. This is particularly important as it would appear that often it is not concrete practice which creates disagreement, so much as the ideology that informs it, the nature of the social movement with which that ideology is identified and the definition of the subject area. The same activity located within different contexts can excite highly divergent reactions. The reference in the Review Group Report (HMSO, 1982) to 'safe' contexts is, perhaps, an indication of this.

The position is further complicated by the fact that the approaches outlined can be adopted in a highly instrumental manner and this means that simple connections between ideology and approach have to be abandoned. For example, particular 'civic' information may be required by a group engaged in collective action and it is acquired through attendance at a course. It does not mean that the course members necessarily subscribe to all the value positions implicit within the conception of politics, nor even to aspects of its practice. Nor does it mean that the worker necessarily subscribes to all the values and practices. It may simply be that they have a high 'use value' within the context of the worker's and the group's thinking and practice.

Overall this discussion indicates the importance of examining the ideological positions of those who are involved. If, as Gramsci (1971) argues, ideologies 'organize' human masses and 'create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle etc' (p. 377), then this is obvious. Clearly care has to be taken with such a slippery concept, and here it is used in the non-pejorative sense of *Weltanschauung* or 'world-view'. Such sets of meanings and ideas develop within specific social circumstances and may be connected with given material interests. However, here is not the place to enter into methodological debates about the nature of such connections, rather it is to assert the significance of ideology for our purposes. Particular ideological perspectives may well predispose participants to particular approaches; they will certainly influence how the approaches are experienced and interpreted.

All of this makes the relative neglect of ideology within much of the mainstream debate about the theory and practice of political

education all the more regrettable. When compared with other areas of educational and welfare endeavour, the contrast is quickly apparent. The problem isn't simply one of relative absence, but also concerns the lack of sophistication in the way the concept is applied where it does appear. For example, simple linear models such as that proposed by Porter *et al* (1983) may be compared with discussions such as that of Giroux (1983) or Lee and Raban (1983). It may well be that much of the debate takes place within or between so-called conservative or liberal reformist positions (Harber, 1984) and as such falls into the trap of labelling thought beyond the boundaries of their debates as 'ideological', that is to say, distorted. However, in doing so, major elements of difference are obscured and, perhaps more importantly, the positive aspects. As both the medium and outcome of lived experience, ideology functions not only to limit human action but also to enable it. 'That is, ideology both promotes human agency and at the same time exerts force over individuals and groups' (Giroux, 1983).

Workers exploring some of these approaches have come to see the critical importance of ideology. Much of the argument about political education practice is better understood as being disagreement about ideology than about the nature of intervention. In this there is the potential for significant political education. As Goodwin argues, the more aware people are of the ideological nature of their own thought and the more explicit about values, the better they will be able to identify and criticize those of others and to promote their own. 'Most important of all, understanding the pervasive nature of ideology helps us to expose and scrutinize the hidden premises and values which are treated as established facts in a particular society' (Goodwin, 1982).

The Potential for Political Education in Youth Work

The use of action-based and practical forms of political education within schooling has presented both practical and conceptual difficulties. Questions concerning the extent to which pupils are only playing at politics, difficulties about how boundaries to pupil participation are to be legitimated, the nature of schools as hierarchical organizations and the practical problems of direct engagement in local neighbourhoods have all been well aired (Tapper and Salter, 1978; Wringe, 1984). The relative failure of the Programme for Political Education to engage with these questions has

led to the charge that the 'movement seemed more concerned to preserve rather than improve upon the basic form of society in which we live' (Whitty, 1985, p. 157). Here I want to ask to what extent does youth work provide a 'context for a genuinely meaningful and critical education' (*ibid*).

First we need to recognize that the sort of groups that full-time workers work with and within, will frequently have an organizational and legal status quite independent of the local authority. They are frequently the sort of groups that Entwistle had in mind when advocating associational democracy — local drama groups, football clubs, churches, mothers' unions and townswomen's guilds, chambers of commerce, learned societies, cooperative societies, philanthropic associations and consumer groups. (This is Entwistle's list, 1981.) Thus while the worker may be employed by a local authority and therefore in some way bound by its policies, the groups which s/he is employed to assist are not. In effect we have organizations that are 'flatter' than most formal educational institutions; which through their 'associational' status have structures that are open to a certain amount of direct participation by the membership or local community; and that engage with political institutions at the macro-level in a way that is rather more plastic to their members (Smith, 1984). We therefore have a site for political education of the 'participative' kind that could be a good deal more convivial than that afforded by the formal educational institution.

A second factor in the ability of youth workers to engage in more critical forms of political education is the very marginality of their work. The youth service budget usually accounts for less than 1 per cent of any local education authority budget and is therefore on a par with adult education. As such it tends to be subjected to a relatively lower degree of scrutiny, that is until a club or project enters into what the politicians and policy makers feel is their territory. Even here the very marginality of these educational forms can act in their 'favour'. Reeves and Chevannes (1984) make this point when discussing the development of parallel provision for black young people. The very existence of projects outside the formal sector that are engaged in the construction of a relevant education for black young people allows policy makers to slip away from tackling the more fundamental problem of racism in the school and its curriculum. They can always argue that they are already doing something. It is one thing to allow a critical political education in a 'marginal' sector, quite another to face it in schools.

Third, the nature of the 'contract' between learner and educator

is somewhat different to that experienced in formal education and is bound by different conventions. The learner enters into the process voluntarily. Young people are not required by law to attend youth centres. It may be that the range of opportunities open to young people in a particular area is such that there is little effective choice, but the fundamental fact remains that they may choose not to attend. Nor is the process usually bound up with formal accreditation or certification. Hence the costs of rejecting youth work or community work provision could be seen as 'lower' in this respect. This apparent ability to accept or reject provision is an important plank in the case for political education in youth work settings. However, youth workers have been open to criticisms because they may appear to offer one thing, 'leisure opportunities', yet may see their prime aim as something else, say social education or political education.

Whilst there is potential here, it could be argued that as soon as critical approaches to political education become effective, they will excite considerable opposition. Fear of the implications of such opposition may lead workers to restrict their activities to those which are considered as 'safe' by their employers (Smith, 1984). There are a number of accounts which demonstrate some of the problems that workers can encounter (Taylor and Ratcliffe, 1981; Rosseter, 1987). However, as Ingram (1987) demonstrates, even when difficulties are encountered, there are strategies that can defend space for critical work, although these can be extremely wearing for the workers concerned. Thus, whilst the level of discretion at the 'front-line' combined with the 'associational' nature of the organizations within which workers operate and the relationship between workers and young people does mean that there are countervailing forces, the potential for a critical political education that attempts to connect theory making with political action is still to be fully recognized.

Reflection and Theory Making

Many of the fears expressed about the nature of an activity labelled political derive from a more general lack of specificity about the purpose of youth work. Part of the problem lies with the scale and nature of the youth work labour force. Within the youth club/youth project sector 97 per cent of face-to-face workers are part-time, two thirds of whom are unpaid (Harper, 1985). The overwhelming bulk

of the work undertaken within uniformed organizations is voluntary. Most workers possess little specialist training or indeed time to reflect upon what they are doing. Caught between leisure provision, welfare and education, it is only a minority of units which express a sustained and vibrant sense of educational endeavour (Jeffs and Smith, 1987b). If workers possessed that educational sense and the appropriate conceptual framework and competencies, then the rationale for engaging in explicit political education would be all the clearer.

In addition youth work is blessed with a pernicious anti-intellectualism. One of the common themes in youth work and community work is the concentration on experience and the downgrading of approaches that could be seen as approximating to information assimilation. Indeed, there is hostility to the idea of theory itself (Jeffs and Smith, 1987a). 'Issues' such as racism and sexism can therefore appear in a disconnected way, as can the very elements of practice. There is a tendency in much that passes for experiential learning in youth work to rely on the experience itself as a means of learning. As a consequence, little attention is paid to reflection. Here reflection being taken to mean the recollection of salient events, attending to feelings and the re-evaluation of the experience (Boud *et al*, 1985). Without such reflection it is difficult to see how theory can be made.

The undervaluing of theory making isn't the only problem. Situations may or may not be set up for the primary purpose of enabling learning. Workers may find themselves operating in pubs, discos and leisure centres. This has important implications for the way in which participants view the endeavour, where what is apparently offered is some form of entertainment or social provision, yet workers within those settings may wish to engage them in 'education'.

In addition, the classic tension between product and process is well to the fore. All the approaches have both product and process outcomes. Here I am using 'process' to refer to the ways in which different resources (or inputs) are used. Products are the concrete events or things that we create. Both products and processes will have results or outcomes. Youth workers and administrators are often keen on work that can be readily seen and counted. Thus annual reports will contain information about product outcomes — the number of cups won, attendance at various sessions and so on. Process results are far less tangible. They are to do with the strengthening of people's competence and feelings. A group may be cam-

paigining for the siting of a health centre on their estate. The product if they are successful, would be a new health centre. The process — working as a group, organizing, lobbying and so on — may well lead to certain process outcomes such as a growth in competence, confidence, enjoyment and knowledge. Which is the group to concentrate upon, particularly given that the achievement of their product goal could also lead to a strengthening of their confidence? In addition, developing an understanding of process requires particular competencies in the worker and substantial time devoted to it. Thus, alongside the tension between product and process, there are inherent difficulties in approaching process within a largely non-reflective ethos.

Some of the approaches have built-in mechanisms in order to test memory and ability — perhaps the most obvious example here being the uniformed youth organizations with their badges and tests. Others, where there is a strong sense of the educational, find ways of creating the room for reflection and of enabling people to build and apply theory as, perhaps, some of the examples of practice given suggest. However, the informality of the settings, the voluntary and multifaceted nature of any 'contract' between learners and educators in non-formal approaches, the lack of specialist training, and a general anti-intellectualism and lack of attention to purpose, contribute to the relative neglect of the reflective process. As Yarnit (1980) has commented about adult education in the community, what can result is vacuous gimmickry and an obsession with form at the expense of content.

Conclusion

Youth work provides us with a fascinating set of contrasts. On the one hand there are workers who have striven to develop approaches to political education that do connect with the experiences of everyday life and that utilize and lead to action. It can be seen that the nature of youth work organization does allow for experiential forms, but that this is hampered by a limited sense of the educational and fear of entering territory labelled as 'political'. In addition, the crucial importance of ideology and ideological critique has been highlighted. What is revealed, though, is that there are possibilities for a critical political education within the non-formal sector.

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The Politics of Political Education in 16-19 Vocational Preparation

Robert Shemilt

The intention of this chapter is to examine the impact of curricular and management changes on the provision of political education in the 16-19 sector of vocational education. These changes will be discussed against the background of the education/training debate and the growth of the influence of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), Business and Technical Education Council (BTEC), Department of Education and Science (DES) and others in the formation of the 'new FE'.

The Background

Pre-vocational and vocational preparation are minefields of uncertainty and change. The 16-19 sector has undergone some of the most fundamental changes of any of the branches of education, largely, and ironically, as a result of the rapid growth of unemployment in this age group. In order to understand how the present position has come about, it is necessary to examine the last decade of provision in both full-time and part-time education and training.

Beginning with educational developments, as opposed to training, the Further Education Unit¹ (FEU) publication *Signposts* explains,

Ten years ago, relatively non-academic 16-18-year-olds in search of a full-time course were new arrivals on the doorstep of colleges. They were likely to have left school with a mixed bag of qualifications, probably some middle-range CSEs, and maybe the odd 'O' level pass. They were

probably aware that they were in need of some further personal and educational development before starting work, but were reluctant to stay on at school, which could at that time probably only offer a repeat of the single subject courses they had followed up to the age of 16. They usually wanted to work, fairly soon, and often had a rough idea of the area of work they wanted, although their aspirations were frequently highly unrealistic. Sometimes they were under pressure from home to attend college, since the name suggests a certain status, and initially they often presented themselves for 'O' levels, secretarial or engineering courses, the areas with which they were most familiar. Since entrance tests for these standard college courses usually resulted in failure, and since colleges were reluctant to turn away prospective students, a number of general education courses with a vocational bias were developed to respond to this new demand.²

The response to this demand was very much based upon the staff of the particular institution and on the courses provided by the various examining boards, for example, the Royal Society of Arts Vocational Preparation. What became apparent was that a plethora of courses leading to various certificates was available and the content was one which, according to Benett and Tuxworth,³ usually contained subjects known as 'Citizenship' and the 'Nature of British Institutions' which were part of the 'core' aims and taken by all students. However, rather than an emphasis solely on British constitutional knowledge the FEU also had in mind, at least in the early stages of the development of vocational preparation, the teaching of political skills. In the document *Vocational Preparation* published in January 1981 George Tolley, the Chairman of the Board of Management of the FEU (members of which included representatives of the Manpower Services Commission, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and the Department of Education and Science), claimed for the report:

This report is concerned with curriculum — with proposing a curriculum framework for vocational preparation for young school leavers. Vocational preparation is a broad curriculum concept going well beyond mere preparation for a job, although that relatively narrow aim is now important for many young people. But this report is concerned with much more than that — with basic skills, with the

development of confidence and potential, with acceptance of responsibility, with interpersonal relationships and with values. Responsibility for vocational preparation has become fragmented, distributed amongst various agencies and services. This report brings together the various strands in vocational preparation and places the individual student in the centre.⁴

Furthermore, the importance of the report was that it was to be implemented.

The report calls for new attitudes to learning and for changes in teaching methods, in the relationships between teacher and teaching methods, and in the relationships between teacher and learner. Above all else it seeks to restore the primacy of the vocational within the curriculum. 'There must be few more important contemporary issues in education than the needs of the young school leaver, especially those who have in the past been neglected or poorly provided for. This report is concerned with those needs and it is published for serious consideration and debate — and for implementation.'⁵

The curriculum that was envisaged was, with minor adaptations, to be based on a previous FEU document *A Basis for Choice*⁶ (ABC) and contained a set of common core objectives to which it was expected that all students should be exposed.⁷

Political Literacy

An examination of these common core objectives shows that contained within them are most of the criteria that the Programme for Political Education would consider to be those of a 'politically literate' person, described by the Politics Association as follows:

The Association believes that in order to combat growing disillusion with the democratic process, urgent advances are necessary in what the Programme for Political Education called political literacy. By political literacy is meant a compound of knowledge, skills and attitudes which will enable an individual to be politically effective. At the most fundamental level a politically literate person will possess the basic information necessary to understand political problems

and will have the confidence and ability to contribute towards their resolution should he choose to do so. He will be capable of something more than enlightened self-interest: he will realize the effects of his actions upon others and will understand their different viewpoints. More precisely, political literacy means:

- a critical awareness and understanding of our system of government;
- widespread knowledge of the important issues of the day;
- the ability of individuals to participate in the political process;
- a general acceptance that it is perfectly legitimate for others to hold and pursue political views and policies different from one's own;
- the recognition that in an interdependent society political problems must be resolved by rational debate within the framework of law.⁸

Thus aim 9 of the twelve aims of the common core objectives in the FEU's *Vocational Preparation* is as follows:

Aim 9

To bring about sufficient political and economic literacy, to understand the social environment and participate in it.

Other aims are also relevant to political literacy, for example,

Aim 1

To bring an informed perspective as to the role and status of a young person in an adult society and the world of work.

Aim 5

To provide a basis on which the young person acquires a set of moral values applicable to issues in contemporary society.

Aim 8

To encourage the capacity to approach various kinds of problems methodically and effectively, and to plan and evaluate courses of action.

As had been noted at the time of the previous ABC Report,

The core would include, among other things, moral and political education, the first time they have been prescribed in British schools, and a prescription that the report's author Jack Mansell admits will 'raise a few eyebrows'. (*Times Educational Supplement*, 31 October 1980).

However, before going on to examine the new framework for 16+ education that resulted in the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE) it is necessary to consider the influence of the Manpower Services Commission on part-time educational provision and on work in further education establishments. The attitude of the MSC towards what it regards as 'acceptable' content and qualifications has a direct bearing on the role of the CPVE in the future.

Parallel to the debate on full-time provision, the MSC had, in 1981, published its consultative document *A New Training Initiative*. This was to increase the amount of training given to unemployed youth and to move from the part-time provision of the Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP) and Youth Opportunities Programmes (YOP) to a more effective 'Youth Training Scheme' provision. With £1 billion and a twelve-month scheme to implement, there were over 300,000 places available by 1983.

The MSC had made its position clear as to the relationship between training and education and what it required from its further education courses and it clearly did not involve political education. Indeed, colleges had been warned by the MSC over politics in YOP courses. A letter from Mr. P.F. Robinson, the District Office Manager for the MSC training division in Hammersmith said that 'material with a political or generally controversial content should not be published' and principals were reminded that 'inclusion in the course of political and related activities could be regarded as a breach of your agreement with the MSC and could result in the immediate closure of the course' (*The Guardian*, 29 November 1982). Within a few months the MSC had tried to control and minimize the political education content of its courses even further. It had said that matters 'related to the organization and functioning of society in general' should be excluded unless they are relevant to trainees' work experience (*The Guardian*, 4 September 1983).

How questions regarding the organization of industry, its management structure, capital, profit, wages and conditions can be taught without reference to politics remained unexplained. However, as Gleeson states,

It is within this overall structure that trainees' political horizons are controlled and their broader vision of the issues and possibilities which surround them severely restricted.⁹

As a result, in the further education sector the scheme was seen as a preparation for work but one that did little to enhance the political and economic awareness of trainees and indeed attempted to reconcile them to failure and the acceptance of lower wages. The debate as to whether the further education sector should involve itself with YTS raged and in the NATFHE journal a central point relevant to the development of vocational education was made:

Whilst YTS may, at the moment, be only a relatively small part of total FE provision, the issues that it raises are critical in that they are central to many of the curricular concerns generated by a whole series of new development — NTI, TVEI, CPVE — as well as to the problems generated in more traditional areas by the pressure of students seeking FE as an alternative to employment.¹⁰

The degree of control that the MSC was to have over the development of further education and pre-vocational education was to become apparent as it grew in strength.

The Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education

In May 1982 the DES released a policy statement called *17+: A New Qualification*. This concluded that the existing plethora of qualifications was not fulfilling the needs of the large numbers of 16-year-olds wishing to continue in full-time education. It proposed a new framework for providing for this group and this was to be compatible with the developments of the Youth Training Scheme and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). This new award, to become known as the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education, was to be administered by the newly formed joint Board of Pre-Vocational Education: a combination of B/TEC and the City and Guilds London Institute (CGLI) with representatives from the RSA and GCE boards.

The Joint Board's Consultative Document (The Red Book) appeared in May 1984 and after consultation the final document was published in January 1985 (The Blue Book). The importance of CPVE in the government's plans for vocational education was

stressed. In paragraphs 65–71 of the Red Book the development plans were laid down. CPVE was to 'secure coordination and where possible an appropriate common curriculum content with relevant part-time provision, and with provision made in association with the Manpower Service Commission'.¹¹ CPVE was to fit in with the 14–18 continuum, to dovetail with TVEI, subsume existing post-16 provision and to liaise with GCE and CSE boards.

In its core aims and objectives most of the moral and political innovations of the ABC and vocational preparation documents reappeared. The CPVE was to provide a curriculum 'framework', the idea being to facilitate a more fluid, student-centred approach. The framework was to encourage a wide variety of student study and individual programmes with a checklist of 'core' skills that could be obtained. The CPVE was divided into three categories:

- (i) a common core of skills and knowledge that would be applied in a variety of situations;
- (ii) vocational study — which was to provide the focus for the development of the abilities defined in the common core;
- (iii) additional studies — which were designed to allow the students to follow other courses that may be personally relevant outside of the main framework of CPVE.

The core and vocational studies together were to provide 75 per cent—vocational studies would occupy 25 per cent and be integrated with the core studies for 20 per cent of the core time. What was significant for present purposes was that six of the ten recognized core studies (working in groups; creative development; problem solving; personal and career development; industrial, social and environment studies; communication) contained key elements of political education as the following extracts demonstrate¹²:

Social Skills

Aim 1: Working in groups

To appraise the shared purposes, procedures and internal dynamics of groups by

- 1.1 participating in a variety of ways in group tasks;
- 1.2 understanding formal and informal procedures used by groups to conduct their business and achieve their purposes;

- 1.3 recognizing the different needs represented within a group — to be included, to influence others;
- 1.4 observing how the behaviour of self and others may change in different group situations;
- 1.5 recognizing and understanding tensions generated within groups;
- 1.6 contributing to achievement of the overall purposes of the group.

Creative Development

To develop ability to make critical judgments in expressive areas by

- 3.1 participating in events which demand involvement and commitment, and events from which participants are distanced;
- 3.8 expressing reasoned views on cultures distanced from self by historical, social, ethnic and age differences.

Problem Solving

Aim 1: Exploration

- 1.1 sharing with other students personal experiences of problems encountered;
- 1.2 comparing ways in which members of a group see these problems;
- 1.3 discovering ways in which groups from differing backgrounds perceive and approach problems;
- 1.4 establishing possible reasons for differences in perception and approach;
- 1.5 finding out which problems are within the individual control or influence of people concerned;
- 1.6 exploring and categorizing, both as an individual and as a group member, a range of issues which are;
 - within/without individual control or influence;
 - soluble/non-soluble;
 - personal/community/national/international;
 - human/mechanical/natural;

- negotiable/non-negotiable;
- avoidable/unavoidable.
- 1.7 investigating methods by which individuals can try to influence situations over which they have no direct control;
- 1.8 suggesting a line of action which might influence a chosen situation.

Personal Career Development

Main aim

To develop in young people a perception of their potential role and status in an adult, multicultural society, including the world of work.

Aim 3: Morals and ethics

To consider a range of social, moral and ethical issues and formulate personal values by

- 3.1 recognizing the relationship between rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society;
- 3.2 formulating a code of behaviour in relation to selected issues and dilemmas, involving clashes of principle;
- 3.3 recognizing bias and its effect on human relationships — race, sex, age, class, and religious discrimination.

Industrial, Social and Environmental Studies

Aim 2: Political considerations

To develop awareness of political considerations in order to understand and participate in the social environment by

- 2.1 participating in a variety of decision making activities and evaluating the method by which decisions are reached;
- 2.2 identifying the individual's rights and opportunities for political involvement and the factors upon which these depend;
- 2.3 investigating and explaining common features of political processes in a range of contexts;

- 2.4 investigating the differences between the major British political parties;
- 2.5 explaining the roles and responsibilities of local and central government and the effects of their activities;
- 2.6 identifying and explaining the purposes of the major international political and economic organizations.

Communication

- 5.2 identifying statements which are/are not supported by evidence;
- 5.3 supporting statements of facts or opinion with appropriate evidence;
- 5.4 identifying, analyzing and responding critically to the emotive use of language.

An important underlying principle of the qualification was that the students should negotiate throughout the programme and be participative in all aspects. The adoption of the principle of negotiation, which alters the 'micro-politics' of the classroom by giving more power and authority to the learners, is one that both teachers and students alike have found difficult to come to terms with. In its report on the pilot schemes the FEU highlights this:

Several pilots pointed to the need for both teachers and students to learn these skills within a clear framework and also for teachers to develop skills in the management of individual learning. Both teachers and students found it difficult to launch into negotiation from a previous situation of no choice.¹³

Individual institutions differed in the way that they interpreted CPVE. Many centres did not see the needs of negotiated learning and integration of core skills and knowledge as central to their programmes. These centres had been running CGLI Foundation programmes, BTEC General or RSA vocational schemes and merely saw the subsumation of them into the CPVE as a change of validating body and certification but not one of curriculum innovation. The core studies were often tacked onto existing vocational courses such as a 'Social and life skills' type course and often taught as separate elements — communication, numeracy etc — in a didactic and formal manner.

However, other centres saw the CPVE as an opportunity to provide a much broader educational provision and within this a chance to develop political and social skills. One method was to use an integrated assignment approach. A theme would be taken that was central to the students' lives such as 'health' or 'leisure' and this would then be developed in group work by discussion, decision-making, plans for action and, finally, the carrying out of what had been decided. In this way students were gaining insight into the practical decision-making process, were having to come to terms with the views of others and, within the bounds of institutional economic and political constraints, were having to make rules to live by. In some cases this very practical political education could be seen to have a direct relevance to their lives as students.

The writer's own group, for example, were provided with a base room which was composed of three classrooms divided by partitions. These partitions, although physically dividing the room into three sections so that occupants could not see each other, still allowed sounds to be heard. At the beginning of the year the rooms were left open so that students were free to work anywhere within the space but it was soon apparent that this was unsuccessful. By the sixth week students met to decide what should happen. As there were thirty-six of them, the main problem they had encountered was noise and their own incompatibility — some wished to work, others to talk. They had grown intolerant of the situation and had become aware of the fact that the power to change lay in their hands only.

The outcome of the meeting was that they designated one room as a quiet area. Into this area they took all reference materials, moved out typewriters and other articles that were frequently needed and rearranged the desks into formal rows. This quiet area had rules attached to it as to how it was to be used.

The idea of getting more comfortable chairs was mooted and the Students' Union representative was asked to discover the feasibility of financing this through the Students' Union. The students themselves regulated and policed the usage of this room once it had been changed. The success of this surprised not only the students but many of the staff who had been pressing for the partitioning of the room to be imposed upon the students. In the end both sides were satisfied but the students had gained important political skills of participating in decision-making on which they have built.

The nature of the institution and how it regards the CPVE is

one political reality which a student can also learn. An important element of the negotiation process for the student is in the area of 'additional' and 'vocational' studies. Where a framework has been designed around an existing vocational course then the student often finds that negotiation is in the form of an 'either/or' option — but in other centres students can learn to practise their skills in negotiating an additional or vocational option within the college. Many of my students have been able to undertake courses in areas of the college where their lack of formal qualification would not have allowed them to participate. However, in developing social and political skills they have learned how a large institution works and have ascertained that, by the time it takes to discover that they haven't the correct entry qualifications, they are ensconced on the course and, faring no worse or better than others, have stayed. Also, as far as progression is concerned, students with CPVE skills can often gain access to courses after their CPVE by proving that they have the ability whilst in the preliminary CPVE year.

Where institutions are not so flexible it soon becomes apparent to the CPVE students that they are not considered important by that institution. The room in which they are placed, the attitude of higher management, the choices they are allowed and the staff they get are often reflections of their low political and economic status in the college. Yet, even in these circumstances, it is possible to turn these disadvantages into positive advantages in the learning of political skills. Students will soon learn the relationship between power and authority in such institutions. The CPVE practitioner can, with thought and expertise, make the student aware of his/her place in the institution and provide important political education as to how best to use the CPVE to gain what the student wants. The way of learning in CPVE through explanation and then practice before assessment means that students can try out their skills many times before being evaluated. They can test the institution and its adherence to the CPVE ethos to its limit. Even within a vocationally-oriented institution the students can be given important areas of decision-making over the course so that they learn that it is possible to have some political power, at least over the learning situation.

CPVE practitioners can go much further in giving their students a political education when they integrate the 'core' skills into all elements of what is done. Active learning methods should be the vehicle by which the students gain this knowledge. In recent research Chris Shilling has found that

'action learning' methods are certainly no less effective than a 'didactic' approach in terms of conveying information and would appear to be much more effective in stimulating debate, discussion and critical thinking.¹⁴

Students should be encouraged to take decisions in the way the programme is run and in the assessment procedures. They could be actively involved in being responsible for determining their own education.

What is important is that CPVE produces articulate and confident students who can utilize their political skills for the benefit of themselves and their group. What is to be avoided is turning the CPVE ethos on its head and using the idea that students should stand on their own two feet as a method of social control. It is very easy to transfer an attitude of blame upon a student in this way. After all, if the student has been responsible for the programme and still does not achieve, then a simplistic explanation is that it is the student's fault — the effort has not been put in and the student is lazy. This can, and should, be avoided if the student is aware of why the larger situation exists and is able to evaluate how much has been learnt.

Conclusion

The political skills and knowledge that are to be gained through the provision of pre-vocational education can be significant in a student's development. Despite the fact that at 16+ the student has undergone eleven years of formal education without necessarily having had much exposure to political education, there is still much that can be achieved to produce an individual who has the ability to understand the political situation, respond to it and evaluate it in a one-year post-16 provision.

However, it is necessary to end on a note of caution. The aim of producing students that are skilled in negotiating their learning aims and objectives, who understand the political nature of the institution they are in and that of the workplace and world beyond and who then move from CPVE to other courses of full-time education or work where they influence change and question the more autocratic methods they encounter, is one that has faded.

At the time of writing, it seems clear that the influence of the Manpower Services Commission over non-advanced further educa-

tion and what provision is adopted as the off-the-job element of the Youth Training Scheme, will weaken the position of CPVE in colleges. The fact that there seems little incentive to use the part-time provision of CPVE as the education element in YTS plus the growth of the safer, less political BTEC first certificate provision means that vocationally-orientated courses that can be firmly controlled as to content will reappear. The breaking down of the Joint Board's solidarity, in that BTEC could consider offering first diploma and certificate courses, means that they consider CPVE to be of a 'lower' level and this is likely to be underlined when the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) announces its 'ranking order'.

The development of CPVE marked the culmination of a movement for curriculum change in a pre-vocational direction that started in the mid-1970s. For the first time in the debate over pre-vocational education, educational needs had been emphasized over vocational, industrial, economic and governmental demands. Also, for the first time in pre-vocational education political education had been recognized as a significant element of a student's overall development. If CPVE is to continue, its methodology and content should be a fundamental framework dominating the whole of further education. Unfortunately, it is likely to remain as a 'low level' provision for those students who can't be found, or are not qualified for, a vocational course in the prestigious subject departments.

Notes

- 1 The Further Education Unit was known as the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit. It was established in 1977 by the Secretary of State at the Department of Education and Science as an advisory, intelligence and development body for further education.
- 2 FEU (1985) *Signposts '85*, p. 27, para 81. How colleges and examining boards responded to this demand is outlined in chapter 4 of this document.
- 3 BENETT, Y. and TUXWORTH, E. (1984) *CPVE: An Analysis of Curricular Claims*, FEU, RP186, pp 119 and 182.
- 4 FEU, (1981) *Vocational Preparation*, January, p. 3.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 FEU, (1979) *A Basis for Choice*, London, FEU.
- 7 FEU, (1981) *op cit*, pp 39-41.
- 8 BRENNAN, T., (1981), *Political Education and Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

- 9 GLEESON, D., (1984) 'On the politics of youth training', *Educational Review*, 36, 2.
- 10 BOFFEY, R., (1984) 'FE and the YTS', *NATFHE Journal*, October.
- 11 JOINT BOARD FOR PRE-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (1984) *The Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education Consultative Document* (The Red Book), p. 16.
- 12 CPVE part B, core competences and vocational module specifications.
- 13 FEU, (1985) *CPVE in Action*, November.
- 14 SHILLING, C. (1986), 'Teaching methods on a pre-vocational course', *Social Science Teacher*, 16, 1, p. 36.

Political Education in Vocational Higher Education

Lynton Robins

Introduction

The intention of this contribution is to consider the provision of BTEC courses — the HND (Public Administration) in particular — as a vehicle for political education. Higher National courses will be analyzed in terms of establishing suitable contexts for political education of students in terms of (i) the acquisition of academic knowledge; (ii) the formation of political attitudes; and (iii) the development of political skills.

The Context of BEC and BTEC

There was increasing concern during the 1960s about the absence of national coordination and monitoring of vocational training courses, which then offered a diverse array of qualifications administered by bodies such as City and Guilds and the Royal Society of Arts. The governmental view was that this *ad hoc* system of course provision was in need of reform. A working party of the National Advisory Council on Education for Industry and Commerce, chaired by Dr H.L. Haslegrave, recommended the establishment of two bodies to oversee the development of a more unified system. The Technician Education Council (TEC) was set up in 1973 with responsibility for vocational areas such as construction and engineering, and a year later the Business Education Council (BEC) was established,

... to plan, administer and keep under review the establishment of a unified national system of non-degree courses for people whose occupations fall within the broad area of Business and Public Administration.¹

In 1983 TEC and BEC merged under the name of the Business and Technician Education Council, BTEC.

The curriculum reform initiated by BEC and later BTEC has been likened to life in Mao's China — that is, existing in a state of permanent revolution. The courses that BEC replaced had been criticized for being too academic in nature and too compartmentalized in terms of component disciplines, rendering them irrelevant to the sort of problems students would soon be facing in the world of work. BEC embarked on massive curriculum reform which involved the fragmentation and selective reassembly of the disparate business studies disciplines into a more integrated structure. Teaching and learning strategies, along with assessment techniques, also underwent radical change. At the same time BEC expanded its interests in opposing directions and assumed responsibilities in the pre-vocational school and post-experience work areas. After the BEC/TEC merger another 'great leap forward' was announced in a number of policy documents and the publication of new course guidelines.

Much of the cutting edge for curriculum change was forged within the operation of the moderation system devised by BEC. Each college or polytechnic offering a BEC course, usually referred to as a 'centre', was visited three times a year by a moderator. In the main, moderators were teachers with some experience of administering or teaching BEC courses. From the outset BEC made explicit the importance of this part-time service:

The cornerstone of the moderating structure is the course moderator. He or she has the widest area of responsibility and will act as a friend of the centre to establish a cordial and effective working relationship. He or she is responsible to the Council for ensuring that the centre conducts the course in accordance with the procedures and specifications upon which approval to offer the course was granted.²

Clearly moderators were placed in a role subject to the contradictory pressures of 'friend of the centre' on one hand and 'quality controller' on the other.

In the initial years of BEC operations both of these moderation roles were furthered by an 'annual review of standards' which drew attention to a specific set of concerns. In one review, for example, the major issue that emerged might be 'integration' and in another it might be 'skills'. What the reviews provided was a focus for

curriculum concern on which the moderator could both provoke and advise on general development in the centres he or she visited. Bob Franklin and Barrie Craven conducted a survey of thirty-eight centres which offered BEC public administration courses in order to investigate how the moderation system was working out in practice. Some 66 per cent of respondents did not regard their moderator as a 'specialist advisor' in their area.³ The same percentage believed that moderators amounted to 'little more than external examiners'. Indeed the 'source of moderators' concern was not academic standards but simply that exam papers were "out of tune with BEC philosophy", quite a different matter'. However, these results are open to an interpretation which reveals both the strength and rigour of the moderation system. BEC moderators do not visit centres in the same specialist capacity as, for example, a CNA external examiner. It is possible that one moderator may oversee business and finance programmes in one centre and public administration and distribution in another. And, of course, within a single programme there may be more specialized options in areas as diverse as personnel management, commercial law, or health service administration. In such a situation, the moderator's attention is necessarily channelled into considering process (the BEC philosophy) rather than content. At the same time scrutiny of examination papers by the moderator provides him or her with a degree of control which stretches over the whole course and not simply over the examination element. It must be said that a sound moderator will scrutinize coursework assignments planned for the current year on his or her first visit, and examine at least a sample of assessed coursework assignments on the second visit. Any 'problems' not detected during these stages of moderation are likely to become evident in the inappropriate nature of the examination papers. Moderators normally negotiate with tutors who submit inappropriate papers and agree on the form of the examination in subsequent years. It is not always possible to agree on other than cosmetic changes in the paper under review since students have been prepared for that examination form and any last minute radical departure would probably leave them stranded. What Franklin and Craven's survey responses do not make explicit is that in accepting changes in subsequent examinations, tutors will be obliged to make congruent changes in teaching/learning strategies and in the coursework assignment programme. In this sense, the moderator plays a far more pervasive role than a conventional external examiner.

As recently as 1983 Stephen Tansey recorded in a survey of higher education that

Despite little national knowledge of, or publicity for, these courses they record applications running into three or more times the number of places available. . . . At least one course tutor suggests that few schools realize the highly vocational nature of [the] NHD'.⁴

An increasing proportion of applicants have a BTEC course as their first choice, but it is still probably true to say that the majority of BTEC applicants either anticipate poor 'A' level results and thus apply for an HND place or have already obtained 'A' level results not good enough to secure a degree place.⁵ Students in employment enrol on the HNC and, at some centres, are able to study for a third year and 'top up' from certificate to diploma. For many full-time students, therefore, the HND is still something of a consolation prize in higher education in the absence of winning a degree place. For part-time students the HNC is instrumental in enhancing immediate career prospects and they will look to it in the longer run to gain exemptions from the examinations of the professional bodies.

In his 1982 survey of higher education, Tansey recorded

BEC courses generally have aroused some controversy resulting partly from the somewhat abrupt, centralized and authoritarian manner in which sweeping changes have been imposed upon a very broad range of courses and institutions.⁶

Given its concern with 'increasing the vocational purpose of Business Education' to be accomplished by a radical rather than incremental approach to curriculum reform, it is inevitable that BEC would attract considerable criticism. Without commercially available projects, 'customized' textbooks, retraining facilities or even remission from duties to prepare for the new courses, many BEC tutors were in difficulties. NATFHE's annual conference voted for the postponement of the BEC revolution, describing it variously as a 'monster' and 'runaway elephant', which was 'threatening to lower standards, and of being implemented at the worst possible time, thereby putting intolerable strains on teachers'.⁷

In a more reflective mood, Peter Morris was critical of the untested assumptions on which BEC proceeded in its reform of the business education curriculum:

The ... argument put forward for change is based on the premise that either employers' needs are not being satisfied, or, because their needs are changing, therefore the present curriculum also needs to be changed. The problem here is that there seems to be no research or evidence to indicate precisely what employers do want or even that they are dissatisfied with the present provisions ... an interesting principle arises — to propose substantial curricular and organizational changes and *then* set up research to find out the necessity, direction and costs of these changes!⁸

The survey conducted by Franklin, Craven and others already referred to, drew together a number of criticisms from BEC tutors. In particular, responses suggested that centres teaching BEC courses had few productive links with those employed in the world of business and administration.⁹ Where consultation had taken place between colleges and employers, only a small minority of tutors believed that it had been 'sufficient'. An overwhelming majority agreed that BEC courses had not been 'designed by staff with recent industrial experience'. The researchers concluded that BEC's vocational purpose, expressed in the BEC philosophy, was being put at risk by the lack of contact between the ivory towers and the real world.

Finally, some tutors queried rather than criticized BEC. They approved of the curriculum changes that BEC had initiated; they applauded subject integration, cooperative group work, role play, simulations, workshops, problem-solving, self-direction, peer assessment, and the general transformation of the 'expository lecturer' into 'a manager of the learning process'. Yet tutors were uneasy that all this took place not in the context of the development of the student as a full individual but in the training of him or her as a more competitive and efficient operative at the place of work. The educational means associated with liberal progressives had been hijacked by those wishing to pursue the economic goals of the political right. In the minds of many tutors the new system contained a contradiction which did not appear that easy to resolve.

The Academic Study of Politics

Under BEC regulations the area of Public Administration was recognized under what was termed 'B4'. Some doubted whether Public

Administration's separate identity would survive the BEC/TEC merger and were consequently relieved when it re-emerged redesignated 'BD8'. Although the cores of other boards contain a political element, BD8 is closest to the interests of academic political educators since Public Administration is essentially a sub-field of the discipline of Politics.¹⁰

From the outset it was intended that the coherence and vocationalism of the new courses would be increased by basing all programmes on four central themes:

Money

Understanding that all business decisions have financial consequences and involve questions of material and human resources.

People

Ability to work effectively with others and awareness that business activity has implications for people as employees, as investors and as consumers.

Communication

Ability to express oneself clearly and simply, to deal appropriately with information, and to interpret written and spoken English.

A Logical and Numerate Approach to Business Problems

Ability to apply numerate and analytical techniques to business problems and awareness of the technological context of such problems.¹¹

In practice, microtechnology and computing emerged as a separate theme. BEC stated that 'it is Council's view that a student's understanding of the concepts implicit in the central themes will ensure that the student can interrelate the material from the various modules within the course in a way which is relevant to his future employment'.¹² New guidelines reformulated 'central' into 'core' themes of resources, people, technology and change. The core themes 'should permeate the learning strategies for both core and option units so that students become aware of their importance and implications'.¹³ In the longer term BTEC hoped that opportunities

resulting from the merger would stimulate the growth of interdisciplinary themes whereby, for example, public administrators would 'appreciate the importance of marketing and design'.¹⁴

Content of the HND is best thought of in terms of core study areas: work organizations, the external environment, and operational techniques and procedures will soon be common to courses in business and finance, distribution studies and public administration. In addition public administration will include the public sector: organizations, structures and processes and resource management in the public sector. Core units (or courses) will be built from core study areas but are not identical to them. Different centres will devise units of differing emphases depending upon factors such as vocational needs or local demand. With this flexibility in mind, the basic illustrative contents of the core study areas are set out in Table 1. In addition to the core, students will study option units. These will vary from centre to centre but typically will involve local government administration or health service administration with some centres offering options in more esoteric areas such as development administration.

In academic terms, then, how adequately does the HND provide a political education? Christine Bellamy and Bob Franklin do not mince their words in their response to this question, alleging that BTEC had 'improverished the provision of education in the subject area of Public Administration'.¹⁵ They argued that 'BTEC discourages knowledge based education even of an applied or relevant kind' and had replaced a broadly-based academic education with a narrowly conceived vocational training:

BTEC philosophy limits the study of Public Administration because BTEC emphasizes a micro approach to problems while Public Administration typically and essentially deals with marco systems. Much of the material of Public Administration cannot be taught in a way which is faithful both to BTEC and to the subject matter ... the teaching methodology (form) determines and dictates content and analysis in a way which is not always acceptable. Students are set to research what is accessible, what is local, what is immediate, but what is also particularist, partial and possibly insignificant. Students on BTEC courses are, for example, much more likely to spend a good deal of time researching a particular local campaigning pressure group than studying

Table 1: Basic Content of the Core Areas

<i>Area</i>	<i>Content/approach</i>
Work organizations	Varieties of work organizations Characteristics of organizational structure Resource acquisition, control and disposal Manpower policy Financial policy Market orientation
The external environment	Local and national government policy Government policy formulation Local and national industrial, commercial and employment structure Economic and social trends National and international legal framework The market environment
Operational techniques and procedures	Planning, problem solving and decision-making techniques Techniques and financial analysis Communication systems and media Sampling, survey and forecasting techniques Legal and administrative procedures
The public sector: organizations, structures and processes	The structure of government The scope of the public sector The role of the public sector The nature and purpose of collective services The role of politics Administration and management in public sector organizations
Resource management in the public sector	The public sector in the economy Resource acquisition in the public sector Resource allocation in the public sector Accountability and control

the nature of policy networks and those general factors determining access to and power within those networks.¹⁶

Bellamy and Franklin continue to make specific criticisms regarding BTEC-style assignments which they see as placing limits on knowledge acquisition in a way that the old fashioned essay did

not. Tutors, they argue, were forced to set 'Walter Mitty' style assignments 'which typically run something along the lines of, "Imagine you are the Prime Minister or Chancellor of the Exchequer, etc etc"'.¹⁷ Such tasks, they felt, 'which range from the fatuous to the merely silly and artificial' undermine the academic credibility of BTEC courses.

Bellamy and Franklin's provocative critique includes some interesting features. In condemning BTEC's approach to public administration education (a sub-field of Politics) they incidentally portrayed quite favourable conditions for the accomplishment of a political education of a more general nature. In those American universities and colleges which have adopted more progressive teaching methods than found in their British counterparts, many Political Science students are engaged in the type of micro-level tasks they described. Exploring the locality is not sufficient in itself as the basis of an academic political education, but nor should it be discounted.

It is also possible to argue that Bellamy and Franklin's account has a dated ring to it. There is little doubt that in the early transition years from the old courses to BEC, many tutors were at their wits' end in trying to meet the requirements of a system they did not fully understand. The 'Walter Mitty' assignment was a particular product of those twilight years between the two systems; it is a caricature of the contemporary course work assignment.

Finally, Bellamy and Franklin may be reacting to presentation as much as substance. BTEC has more or less conceded that in its efforts to champion curriculum reform certain aspects were argued too vigorously:

... the Council's public emphasis on skills development has led to the impression, genuinely and sincerely held by some, that the Council is interested only in skills acquisition and places little importance on the acquisition of knowledge. What originated as an insistence on the importance of 'knowledge *and* skills' has thus come to be seen by some as a matter of 'knowledge *versus* skill'... The Council's position is that knowledge and skills are equally important and inextricably linked... They therefore demand equal emphasis and integrated delivery.¹⁸

If a number of tutors have somehow abandoned 'knowledge' in the cause of 'skills', then this was not apparently BTEC's intention.

Bellamy and Franklin may be right regarding practice in some, perhaps many, centres. It is clear from BTEC pronouncements that the Council suspects that some centres have thrown out the baby with the bathwater. The essential point is, however, that knowledge (including political knowledge) does have an important role in BTEC programmes albeit in a balanced package together with skills.

With these factors in mind, consideration of the content in the core area guide (Table 1) suggests that the HND in Public Administration in particular provides an adequate vehicle for the provision of a knowledge-based political education. Approaches to the material are likely to vary from centre to centre, but in all cases it will be institutional in form and based firmly on the British experience. Compared with the 'holy trinity' of undergraduate study in Politics what is absent is political theory and a comparative element. It is possible, of course, that there may be limited contact with political ideas and comparative material in the option units. In this sense the HND stands in much the same position as the early 'A' levels in British Government which followed the demise of 'Brit. Con'.

The Development of Political Attitudes

BTEC publications have not included substantial comment about the development of specific attitudes despite its philosophy being based on a participative educational ideology. As we shall see below courses develop a student's individual initiative as well as his or her cooperative skills, a process depending upon the formation of specific attitudes. Some fundamental concern has been expressed regarding the importance of 'motivation' but even here there is surprisingly little detail. From the political point of view motivation is an ambivalent quality; the ruthless managerially-efficient official can be quite a different animal from the socially-committed client-protective administrator.

Many course tutors would agree that there are discernible differences between BTEC students and their undergraduate colleagues, although such differences must not be exaggerated. BTEC students are more likely to be vocal in class, more willing to challenge authority and more likely to show enterprise in one form or another. Some feel that these tendencies are in large part a result of the educational process, which involves more 'open' teaching situations. Others feel that BTEC students are simply more 'laid back'

insofar as they have already 'failed' within the system by not obtaining a degree place. Being less individually competitive they appear to be both more cooperative and more prepared to risk offering imaginative solutions to the problems they tackle.

Where BTEC differs from many other courses is in providing students with contact with 'the real world' of business and administration. Students will interact with public and private sector officials and complete tasks based on 'real data'. These experiences will vary from centre to centre, and within a centre they will vary from year to year depending upon the opportunities which present themselves. Examples from Leicester Polytechnic will illustrate the point. In the year past, first year students conducted a survey of recent season ticket holders at Leicester City Football Club in an exercise which explored reasons for declining attendances. Students experienced directly public opinion on events such as the Bradford City and Heysel disasters and were able to relate this to consumer behaviour. Second year students interviewed every client who visited the City Council's Housing Department in a week-long survey which was designed to measure satisfaction with the services provided. The reality of the current housing crisis was conveyed vividly in some interviews and a number of students were deeply affected by the experience.¹⁹ What Bellamy and Franklin refer to as BTEC's propensity for the 'assessible, local and immediate' can nevertheless provide students with intense learning experiences which are not readily available in other contexts.

An approximate idea of political orientations can be estimated from the type of career destinations recorded by ex-students, although the danger of stereotyping is acknowledged (police recruits = macho and tough-minded: social workers = wet and tender-minded). A survey of 122 Public Administration students who studied on the HND between 1980-83 provided some data for such speculation.²⁰ Students on the Leicester HND could, if they wished, pursue private sector options such as financial accounting, personnel management or marketing rather than public sector options such as local government administration or health service administration. The result is that students have considerable flexibility on entering the job market. Responses showed that only one student remained unemployed, the remainder gaining places on degree and professional courses or finding work. Of those in work, almost 70 per cent found employment in the public sector with the remaining 30 per cent in private sector employment. But it is noticeable that of those in the private sector 31 per cent worked in personnel departments,

and not all of those in the public sector are in what can be thought of as 'caring' roles. If the public/private sector dichotomy is dropped in favour of a distinction between 'caring' and 'other' jobs, a more ambiguous situation is revealed. Some 51 per cent of ex-students occupied caring roles (typically concerned with housing, health, social services, voluntary bodies and personnel), with 49 per cent in other occupations (typically taxation, banking, commerce, the public utilities and nationalized industries). Of course students have a pragmatic approach to seeking employment — 'a job is a job' — and under current conditions an individual's career destination may be far removed from his or her career preference. Nevertheless the career patterns are not incompatible with the BTEC philosophy's implementation of a business education with a public sector orientation. B4/BD8 students found employment which was neither as public sector oriented nor as 'caring' in nature as their colleagues on the Public Administration degree course, yet at the same time their employment was neither as private sector oriented nor in 'other than caring' jobs as Business Studies students.

The Development of Political Skills

In its documentation BTEC stresses that course aims relate to student performance at the place of work. Recent guidelines, for example, state that course aims for the Public Administration HND are to develop students' ability to relate knowledge and skills and 'use them effectively in employment-related problem-solving and decision-making situations' and develop a range of skills and techniques 'essential to effective performance in working life'.²¹ There has been considerable discussion amongst BTEC tutors on what comprises 'a skill' and the ways in which such skills can be 'developed'. BTEC has stated that the focus for skills development is problem-solving, 'that is the ability of students to recognize, analyze and deal with realistic problems in work-related situations'. This, in turn, will provide a framework for the development of other core skills, an illustrative statement of which is shown in Table 2. In addition to the core skills it is likely that other skills will be developed in the options.

*Table 2: Specimen Skills Statement**

Problem Solving

Stage A Problem Definition

- 1 recognising situation/context in which problems exist;
- 2 collecting relevant information;
- 3 exploring perceptions of the problems;
- 4 clarifying background issues;
- 5 specifying objectives;
- 6 recognising scale, constraints and opportunities of the situation;
- 7 explicitly defining and stating the problems to be dealt with;
- 8 ranking the problems in order of importance.

Stage B Generation of possible solutions

- 1 selecting appropriate techniques, eg brainstorming;
- 2 producing a range of possible solutions including innovative solutions where appropriate;
- 3 defining most feasible alternative solutions;
- 4 identifying and assessing possible secondary problems resulting from each alternative.

Stage C Selection of preferred solution

- 1 choosing criteria to evaluate solutions;
- 2 evaluating alternative solutions;
- 3 choosing most appropriate solution.

Stage D Implementation of solution

- 1 identifying necessary resources;
- 2 identifying possible contingent problems;
- 3 preparing plan of action;
- 4 allocating responsibilities for actions;
- 5 implementing selected solution.

Stage E Evaluation of solution

- 1 selecting appropriate techniques for evaluation;
- 2 collecting relevant information on results/outcomes;
- 3 comparing outcome with original objectives;
- 4 making recommendations for future action.

Learning and Studying

- 1 Identify and pursue appropriate lines of questioning when faced with a task or problem.
- 2 Break down tasks when appropriate into parts or stages.
- 3 Use a variety of reading and other techniques to obtain information.

- 4 Use systematic and effective methods for recording and organising information.
- 5 Review own work and other experience and identify learning that has/has not taken place.
- 6 Determine, with tutorial advice, how learning through such experience can be improved.
- 7 Set targets for continued development of learning and study skills.

Self-Management and Organisation

- 1 Review from own experience consequences to self and others of effective and ineffective organisation.
- 2 Develop strategies for self management (eg fitness, health, punctuality, use of time and resources) necessary to meet own targets.
- 3 Formulate, implement and review a plan of action to improve organisation in an area of own work, work task or other activity.
- 4 Plan tasks in the light of their purpose and expected outcome, with careful attention to briefing, information needs, timescale, cost, resources and safety.
- 5 Work consistently to plan, modifying and adapting where necessary and completing to deadline.

Working with Others

- 1 Identify roles performed by self at work and/or in other specific contexts.
- 2 Review peer and authority relationships involved in such roles, and own attitudes and skills in relation to these.
- 3 Undertake effectively a variety of roles within teams and groups (eg supporting, challenging, defending, directing, enabling, following).
- 4 Exchange information effectively and give/accept assistance to/from others.
- 5 Contribute constructively to planning, implementing and completing a group task.
- 6 Show sensitivity to the values, attitudes, cultural beliefs and practices of others.
- 7 Review own interpersonal skills and set targets for their development.

Communicating

Note: Communication skills should be given high priority in skills development programmes. There are many good, detailed specifications of such skills; what follows concentrates on areas that tend to be under-emphasised.

- 1 Assess own communication skills at work and in other relevant contexts, identifying problems, strengths and weaknesses.
- 2 Identify priorities for development in consultation with tutor and others and review these as the course proceeds.
- 3 Prepare and execute a wide variety of types of communication for different purposes and recipients:
 - oral/written, formal/informal;
 - routine/exceptional, technical/non-technical;
 - informing/persuading/criticising/apologising;
 - to those of equal, superior or inferior institutional status.
- 4 Identify in all cases the purpose, contexts and intended recipient(s) of a message, and employ appropriate form, structure, language, style and tone.
- 5 Use appropriately a range of methods, media and techniques.
- 6 Use and interpret non-verbal elements in communication (sound, signs, gestures, expressions, body language).
- 7 Use illustrative material to support a message where appropriate (visual, graphic, numerical, aural).
- 8 Design/prepare a structured communication for a specific, relatively complex situation.

- 9 Identify likely causes of breakdown in an intended communication (mood, interests, prejudice) and take preventive/remedial action.
- 10 Assess effectiveness of own and others' communications and take additional/remedial action where necessary.
- 11 Question appropriately to clarify or enlarge communication.
- 12 Tolerate criticism and editing of own communications and constructively propose improvement in others.

Information Seeking and Analysis

- 1 Identify specific situations in which information is required and the types of information likely to be of assistance.
- 2 Identify likely sources of required information, including people.
- 3 Select sources and obtain information using a variety of means (interviews, questionnaire, telephone, letter, electronic retrieval, reading, controlled experiment).
- 4 Review, categorise and organise information. Assess its relevance to the task and its validity.
- 5 Draw conclusions and generalise from information where justified.
- 6 Identify reasons for incomplete or inadequate information.
- 7 Determine need for further information and methods of obtaining it.

Using Information Technology

- 1 Review uses of information technology observed at work, during work experience and/or elsewhere.
- 2 Identify types of installation and application packages employed for uses in 1.
- 3 Set up microcomputer with application packages to process data.
- 4 Use computers and other electronic equipment (eg Viewdata, Prestel, Optical Character Recognition, facsimile) as an aid to collecting, storing, analysing and disseminating technical and other information.
- 5 Use computer packages to help tackle technical and other problems.

Numeracy

Note: The purpose of this skill area is to develop application of students' numerical concepts and skill to realistic, vocationally-relevant situations across the curriculum rather than simply doing this in units concerned with mathematics and numeracy.

- 1 Identify specific tasks and situations at work and in everyday life that call for application of numerical techniques.
- 2 Identify appropriate types of application/technique and assess own strengths and weaknesses in these.
- 3 Identify ways in which numerical techniques may help in tackling given problems and tasks. Select appropriate techniques and apply effectively.
- 4 Use methods that give a degree of accuracy appropriate to a situation and employ recognised techniques for approximation when relevant.
- 5 Make appropriate use of the calculator in tackling problems with numerical content.
- 6 Apply concept of measurement creatively and use a range of measures and associated techniques in given situations.
- 7 Apply concepts and techniques of modelling to assist in tackling technical and other problems.
- 8 Employ a wide range of visual methods to explore relationships within a task or situation: — maps, plans, flowcharts, diagrams, models, sketches and drawings.

Practical Skills

Note: Practical skills required for particular vocational areas vary widely, but all BTEC students need some skills of this kind. Practical skills need not be limited to manipulation or use of equipment but may include skills of design, drawing, planning, organising, and observation/control/evaluation of processes.

- 1 Identify practical skills required in relevant work, work experience and selected aspects of everyday life.
- 2 Identify practical skills associated with own work for which appreciation rather than direct practice is required.
- 3 Appraise own level of skill in relevant areas. Compare this with level of skill desirable and set priorities for development.
- 4 Observe practitioners in a range of relevant activities involving practical skill and identify competences required.
- 5 Identify ways in which relevant skills can be developed in the course, during work experience and elsewhere, and undertake necessary practice.
- 6 Undertake individual and/or group project(s) relevant to own vocational area and involving such skills.
- 7 Select, use and where relevant maintain processes, materials, tools and equipment suitable for purpose.
- 8 Participate in peer appraisal of skills, products and achievements.

Skills Associated with Science and Technology

Note: There are few courses in which some awareness of scientific method has no relevance. The method may be applied in social as well as natural sciences.

- 1 Investigate and report on a major application of science significantly affecting own work or a relevant area of interest.
- 2 Identify how the scientific development occurred, reasons for its application, and ways it affects work processes.
- 3 Formulate a realistic hypothesis which, if true, would have implications within own vocational area, and design an investigation/experiment to test it.
- 4 Participate as a member of a group in undertaking and/or evaluating an investigation or experiment.
- 5 Review a variety of scientific experiments or investigations and identify major elements of scientific method.

and/or

Identify a major technological development affecting own work, etc, and investigate/report on its likely effects.

- 6 Use systems approach to analyse a technological process associated with own work, etc, and to propose improvements, having regard to costs, efficiency, effect on workforce/firm/public.

Design Skills

Note: Design skills are central to some BTEC courses, but they are increasingly important in all vocational areas and so should receive serious attention from all BTEC students.

- 1 Review a range of products, environments, materials, etc and evaluate design, having regard to function, effect, use of resources and cost.
- 2 Compare personal design preferences within peer group, and review factors that make for good design.
- 3 Participate in peer appraisal of designs and products, and evaluate them in terms of fitness for purpose, use of design elements, safety and cost-effectiveness.
- 4 Identify ways in which specific products or other applications of design communicate values, and identify those values (or absence of relevant values).
- 5 Propose simple improvements in design of processes, systems, etc.

- 6 Design, plan and produce, as an individual and/or as a member of a group, a product, spatial relationship, process, system, etc, for a specified purpose.
- 7 Use care and discrimination with regard to design elements such as colour, shape, spatial and other relationships, materials, use of symbols.

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How far would the acquisition of these skills make an individual politically competent? The answer must be: very much. Although these skills are developed with a vocational intention, it is unrealistic to suggest that they would only have currency at the place of work. In the first place, an individual's life is rarely divided totally between employment and other activities in terms of skills. An individual who is literate and numerate does not leave those skills behind at the workplace. In the second place, such skills that are work-related in a technical sense are likely to be transferable to other, including political, contexts. For example the twelve communication skills shown in Table 2 which may be practised at the workplace are very similar to the skills which would increase the political competence of an individual in both formal and informal political settings assuming that he or she decided to exercise them. Even aspects of the highly technical skills areas, such as design and visual discrimination ('Identify ways in which ... applications of design communicate values') have a political significance which is likely to increase rather than diminish.

It is difficult to compare the relative effectiveness of different attempts to reform seemingly disparate areas of the curriculum, but there is an argument that the BTEC revolution has had a far greater impact upon events than, say, the Programme for Political Education. The BTEC philosophy was not a 'philosophy' at all in the sense that a political scientist would use the term but merely a code phrase regarding the new vocationalism and associated teaching methodology. The approach did strike many traditionally-minded tutors as being unbalanced; there was too little concern with content and too much on skills. In contrast the Programme for Political Education seemed overconcerned with knowledge/content and context of teaching in terms of procedural values. What was largely absent was any precise statement on what sort of skills a politically literate student would possess. Returning to the documents of 1975-76 revealed only four basic political skills made explicit: the ability to express one's own interests and principles, the ability to offer justifications and reasons for acting on one's beliefs, the ability to perceive the interests and principles of others, and the ability to

understand the justifications and reasons of others.²² Indeed, one diagrammatic representation purporting to list 'skills' actually referred to what appeared to be more in the nature of teaching methods ('debates, games, simulations and projects of a political and social kind').

It was a common assumption — which I, Clive Harber and Roland Meighan have made at different times and in different places — that once the appropriate context of political education had been created, skills would somehow materialize and 'rub off' onto students.²³ Would the cause of political education have been better served had the educators adopted the hard-headed approach of BTEC? Did the twin focus of the PPE absorb the attention of would-be participants who began defending their philosophical positions on political education rather than 'getting on with the job' of skills development? Would the skills approach have led to a realization that political skills pervade the curriculum — that, for example, literacy and numeracy are important political skills?

Conclusion

The political knowledge acquired and the skills developed on BTEC courses suggest that the HND is a promising vehicle for accomplishing a positive political education. There is little published evidence on attitude formation, but even here there is nothing to suggest that the BTEC educational process generates other than democratically-congruent attitudes. Indeed, there are reasons for arguing that the Public Administration HND provides the context for the pursuit of a rounded political education. Although political content tends to be limited to institutional material, the focus on skills development works towards the attainment of a level of political competence which is not usually possible through the pursuit of academic knowledge alone, no matter if it is based on the 'holy trinity' of Political Science. It seems plausible to conclude that the skills designed to restore the performance of the business and administrative communities will frequently be transformed across to the political environment and should result in the revitalization of parts of the democratic process. If this speculation proves sound, then the 160,000 or so current student registrations on BTEC courses represent a promising political statistic.

Notes

- 1 See SELLARS, J. (1977) 'Introduction of courses leading to BEC awards', *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 1, 3, pp 14-16.
- 2 BEC (1977) *The BEC Moderation System*, London, BEC.
- 3 FRANKLIN, B. and CRAVEN, B. (1981) 'The BEC moderator; Jekyll and Hyde, or the search for an elusive identity', *Business Education*, Summer, pp 91-5.
- 4 TANSEY, S. (1983) 'Politics courses in higher education: Developments in 1982/3', *Teaching Politics*, 12, 3, pp 291-9.
- 5 'For a BTEC Higher National qualification, the normal entry requirement will be a minimum age of 18, with possession of an appropriate BTEC National qualification. An alternative to a BTEC National qualification would be a profile of attainment in the GCE/GCSE, to include "A", "AS" and "O" levels (or other similar qualifications), which is acceptable to BTEC' (BTEC, 1984, *Policies and Priorities into the 1990s*). In practice the minimum entrance requirement has been one 'A' level and three 'O' levels although many centres normally require maths and English at 'O' level. In response to increased competition for places, many centres have raised the number of points required at 'A' level.
- 6 TANSEY, S. (1982) 'Politics courses in higher education: Review of recent developments', *Teaching Politics*, 11, 3, pp 259-77.
- 7 See ALBERT, T. (1979) 'The trouble with TEC and BEC', *The Guardian*, 9 May.
- 8 MORRIS, P. (1977) 'The proposals of the Business Education Council: A critical appraisal of BEC as an exercise in curriculum development', *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 1, 3, pp 3-13.
- 9 FRANKLIN, B., CRAVEN, B. and RAWLINGS, G. (1982) 'BEC Public Administration: A challenge for further and higher education — results of questionnaire', *Teaching Public Administration*, 11, 1, pp 12-19.
- 10 See WILSON, D. and WOODHEAD, N. (1985) 'Public administration' in ROBINS, L. (Ed.) *Introducing Political Science*, London, Longman.
- 11 BEC (1976) *First Policy Statement*, London, BEC.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 BTEC (1985) *Course Guidelines for Higher National Qualifications in: Business and Finance, Distribution Studies, Public Administration*, London, BTEC.
- 14 BTEC (1984) *Policies and Priorities into the 1990s*, London, BTEC.
- 15 See BELLAMY, C. and FRANKLIN, B. (1985) 'BTEC's Educational Policy and Public Administration', *Teaching Politics*, 14, 2, pp 160-74.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 BTEC (1985) *Course Guidelines*, London, BTEC.
- 19 Consultancy reports based on student data collection; O'DONOVAN, C. (1986) *Declining Attendances: Behaviour and Attitudes of Season Ticket Holders at Leicester City Football Club 1984-85 to 1985-86*, Leicester, Leicester Polytechnic; and DENScombe, M. and ROBINS, L.

- (1986) *A Survey of User Satisfaction Conducted for the Housing Department of Leicester City Council*, Leicester, Leicester Polytechnic.
- 20 A survey of ex-students from the Public Administration HND course, Leicester Polytechnic, was conducted as an exercise by students in 1986. Findings were based on a 43 per cent response rate.
- 21 BTEC (1985) *Course Guidelines*, London, BTEC.
- 22 See, for example, CRICK, B. (1976) 'Procedural values in political education', *Teaching Politics*, 5, 1, pp 11-24.
- 23 See ROBINS, L. (1979) 'Political literacy: Caught or taught?', *International Journal of Political Education*, 2, 4, pp 311-24; and HARBER, C. and MEIGHAN, R. (1986) 'Democratic method in teacher training for political education', *Teaching Politics*, 15, 2, pp 179-87.

Development in the Study of Politics at the Undergraduate Level

John Dearlove

Introduction

In 1909 the University of Oxford established a lectureship in political theory and institutions and in 1912 this lectureship was made into the Gladstone Professorship. In 1926, in his professorial inaugural lecture at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Harold Laski announced that 'the chair to which I have had the honour to be called is but the second of its kind in the country'.¹ By 1984 the University Grants Committee (UGC) reported that there were sixty-nine professorships in the field of government and public administration. In 1950, the Political Studies Association was formed. At that time total membership was said to be about fifty,² but by 1981 it was reported to have a membership of 825 and a Political Studies Association survey conducted in 1978 located 1056 political scientists working in forty-eight universities, twenty-three polytechnics and eleven 'other' institutions.³

'As far as I know', wrote G.D.H. Cole in 1950, 'no British university offers a first degree in politics alone'⁴, and yet by 1983 the UGC reported that 968 first degrees were awarded in the government and public administration category whereas just twenty years earlier only 202 such degrees were awarded. Nor do these figures of growth tell the whole story with respect to the study of politics at the undergraduate level because they fail to take account of the role of the Open University (and in 1980 over 2000 students were studying politics on Open University courses) and the role which the polytechnics have come to assume in the last twenty or so years. A recent survey suggests that there may be as many as 3000 undergraduates studying politics at polytechnics although this is usually as a component of a larger pattern of studies and it is

recognized that polytechnics play only a limited role in postgraduate teaching.⁵

Recent and rapid growth has also been a feature of postgraduate education in politics. In the academic year 1967–68, 201 higher degrees in government and public administration were awarded, but in 1983 the number had climbed to 536.

In 1926, Laski bemoaned the fact that the fledgling discipline of political science had no journal (he clearly chose to ignore *Public Administration*, first published in 1923) and yet if we survey the journal scene in the 1980s we have available to us such 'classics' as *Political Studies*, *Political Quarterly*, *Government and Opposition*, and *Parliamentary Affairs*, as well as the new political science of the *Britain Journal of Political Science*, the newer breeds of specialist journals on such topics as *Electoral Studies*, *Soviet Studies*, *Local Government Policy Making*, and *West European Politics*, and the 'radical' journals such as *Race and Class*, *Capital and Class*, *New Left Review*, *Review of African Political Economy*, and *Critical Social Policy*.

Looking back to his time at Oxford before the war, W.J.M. Mackenzie recognized that the 'native market' for the study of politics was 'too small' to make the publication of textbooks a viable proposition and so a 'year's work was ample to bring one abreast of what was available in academic print'. Moreover, he noted that "'research" was scarcely yet a concept; the thing was not to "do research" but to "write a book"'⁶. Today, no political scientist can keep up with but a fraction of 'their' field. Moreover, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) was established in 1965, and a survey of the political science profession in 1978 revealed that research and publications were seen by 99.6 per cent of men and 86.9 per cent of women as important to their careers.⁷

In terms of students, teachers, journals, publications, and research, the discipline of politics has grown by leaps and bounds — and has done so comparatively recently. Having said that, politics continues to be one of the smaller university subjects and it has felt the blast of the cuts in state funding in the 1980s. In 1983, the *Newsletter*⁸ of the Political Studies Association published the results of a survey of politics departments in universities and other public sector institutions noting that one-third of universities and one-quarter of public sector institutions reported having lost staff through early retirement. Not surprisingly, an earlier edition of the *Newsletter*⁹ reported that the membership of the Political Studies Association had dropped to 753 in 1985. A register of part-time and

temporary lecturers was set up to help unemployed postgraduates and a hardship fund was established to help unemployed political scientists attend the annual Association conference. In 1979–80, the SSRC awarded 117 postgraduate awards for political science, but by 1984–85 the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) felt able to grant just forty-three awards to the Government and Law Committee. Applications to study politics in universities in 1986 were down 12 per cent on the 1985 figure.

These statistics of recent growth and even more recent decline are bald. They do not tell us about what has been happening within the discipline in terms of teaching, research and debate. How, then, has the subject matter of the discipline been defined over the years; what approaches have been developed to make sense of things; how did the expansion of the sixties and seventies affect the shape and developments of the discipline; and what are the implications of the eighties cuts for the drift of teaching and research? In my view we can best deal with these questions if we recognize that changes have occurred over the years. Answers to many of the questions I have posed will differ depending on the period to which we direct our attention, although many of the periods overlap and interpenetrate. In broad terms, we need to attend to the traditional 'political studies' phase of the discipline — a phase that embraces the discipline of politics from the beginning of this century down to the 1960s and even beyond; we need to explore the challenge which the development of a hard-nosed and modern 'political science' posed in the 1970s; we need to deal with the rise of Marxism and Neo-Marxism in the discipline; we need to understand the implications of the 'realism' of the New Right that is finding a solid niche for itself within the research side of the discipline; and we must be attentive to the challenge which is being posed by feminist perspectives that focus on gender politics.

Traditional Political Studies

Any account of the developments of politics teaching in British universities must acknowledge the weighty significance of Oxford and also the more generalized concern to improve the quality of government administrators through the teaching of university diploma courses in public administration.¹⁰ The establishment of a lectureship in political theory and institutions at Oxford in 1909 provided a two-fold definition of the subject matter of the discipline —

as about the history of political theory, or philosophy, ideas and the study of political institutions — that has shaped the research and teaching interests of politics faculty for the bulk of this century. Moreover, the creation of the new degree in philosophy, politics and economics in the 1920s provided a teaching model for other universities as well as a supply of teachers who were willing to spread the Oxford politics word further afield.

The impulse to introduce the teaching of politics and public administration was born of an awareness on the part of university reformers that Greek was not for everyone in a situation in which new students were coming to university and when new problems were coming before government. Naturally enough, the teaching of 'modern studies' and a new university subject had to be based on old and established faculties. Historians and philosophers were eager to assert their jurisdiction over political studies. Historians (and to a lesser extent academic lawyers) based their claim to competence on the importance of the tradition of constitutional and legal history, and philosophers chose to link moral to political philosophy and to assert the importance of studying political theory — meaning by that the classics of political thought from Plato's *Republic* to John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*. In a situation in which there were no trained political scientists, political science became defined as what teachers of other disciplines could do: historians felt comfortable dealing with the history of political institutions, lawyers felt happy with constitutions, and philosophers felt at ease with the history of political ideas.

The University of Manchester also has an important place in the developing history of political studies and remains a major centre of teaching and research today. The University did not look to political science in the light of narrowly 'academic' goals but rather saw the discipline as able 'to provide moral guidance and a practical philosophy of life to students whose main intention in entering higher education was to gain vocational and professional qualifications'.¹¹ Notwithstanding these objectives the politics courses at Manchester still focused on institutions and political thought with a dash of public administration and international politics thrown in for good measure.¹²

Given the development of the discipline before the second world war, it is not too surprising that Robson,¹³ in his 1950 survey of 'Political Science in Great Britain', could argue that 'the main division in political science is between theory on the one hand and political or governmental institutions on the other'. Moreover, he

was not alone¹⁴ in highlighting the importance of the 'historical approach' and the 'philosophical approach' to the subject matter of the discipline, although in common with others he was vague as to just what was essential to these two approaches.

The basic stuff of the discipline did not change much with the growth of politics teaching in the sixties. Heater has noted that it is 'clear that as late as the end of 1964 the study of political institutions was still the most important aspect of the subject', and in a survey of politics courses in higher education published in 1981 Tansey has noted how 'a "Holy Trinity" of British politics, political theory and institutions, and comparative politics (based on the UK, USSR, France, USA) dominate most courses'.¹⁵

How can we best characterize this lingering stage of political studies teaching? Crick has argued that 'from the 1950s and through the 1960s there was no possible general characterization of British political studies, except to say "tolerant eclecticism"'¹⁶. The first editor of *Political Studies* surveying the scene in 1975 reported that 'there was no paradigm' when the journal started 'and since then, so far as I can see, no paradigm has emerged'.¹⁷

Now, all this may be true at a simple taken-for-granted level, but Crick himself has felt able to talk about the 'British school' of political studies and as early as 1951 Mackenzie reflected that 'we have a fair measure of agreement about what we mean by teaching political science'.¹⁸ If we leave aside the philosophical side of politics teaching — 'the English tendency to go on writing books about Thomas Hobbes'¹⁹ — and concentrate on the institutional side of the subject that has made some attempt to connect with the 'real world' of politics then we can say that the emphasis has been a narrow one. Political studies has been complacently rooted in an unthoughtout and commonsense concern to praise the British system whilst casting a critical and casual eye over the institutions and constitutions of a few other nations. The focus was on government and not the state; on formal political structures and not political behaviour; and if you asked a learned professor what was politics he 'would have been flummoxed'²⁰ precisely because academics limited their attention to government which they then studied through law and according to the definitions of the politically powerful. This way bias was supposedly avoided. The British system was praised in a way which gave it a legitimacy and there was also a prescriptive and uncomplicated concern to reform it through tinkering modifications to the Commons, Lords, local government, or the civil service. The study of government tended to be abstract because it was not

explored in a larger context. All too often particular institutions were sucked out for dull and detailed description as though they were self-sufficient and operated in a vacuum apart from politics, economics and society. Oxford may have dominated the development of political studies, but Brian Barry has described the study of politics there as 'dull stuff' where 'warmed over facts with a topping of *Times* editorializing seemed to be the formula'.²¹

By the late 1960s, the rapid expansion of politics teaching in universities drew a new generation of students and teachers into the system — teachers who had taken politics as a first degree but who were keenly mindful of the limitations of traditional political studies at the same time as they had done postgraduate research and were attentive to intellectual developments in American universities. There was an eagerness to develop a modern political science over here, in the new universities.

Professionalism and Modern Political Science

If we look at the development of a modern political science in Britain against the backdrop of the ideas and institutions tradition of political studies, then two things help to define crucial aspects of the new movement in the discipline. First, essential to the development of a modern political science has been the concern to downplay the study of political philosophy and the history of political ideas as somehow different and apart from what a real political science should be all about. When Jim Sharpe took over the editorship of *Political Studies* in 1976 (a key event in the concern to break away from the political studies tradition in order to create a political science) he immediately announced that he wished to shift the balance of the journal away from 'traditional political theory' towards more 'modern political theories' that had as their objective the explanation of events in the world of politics today.²² Second, in grappling with the real world of politics, instead of defining the stuff of politics as to do with formal institutions and constitutions, modern political scientists took a wider view as to the subject matter of the discipline. They argued that it was important to somehow 'explain' politics and this meant focusing on political behaviour and making sense of the part played in public policy making by such informal organizations as political parties and pressure groups.

Caught up in this marginalization, if not denigration, of political philosophy and caught up in the ambitions of a science of

politics was a concern to make a distinction between old-fashioned normative theory and modern, value-free, empirical theory. A modern political science, it was argued, was properly centred on explaining and making sense of the political world as it was and so should not make normative judgments and attempt to prescribe how politics ought to be. Facts and values were seen as separate and political scientists needed to be clear that they were geared to making 'is' and not 'ought' statements. Of course, in the nature of things, much was happening under the broad umbrella of this scientific movement. At one extreme there were the few *ultras* who embraced the American science of politics with a vengeance and who held out the promise of a general (and often mathematical) theory of politics based on a 'systems approach' that would somehow explain all politics for all time and in all places. At the other extreme, even timid teachers of the British Constitution who felt threatened by the quantitative demands of the new political science nevertheless felt able to introduce a lecture or two on the part played by pressure groups. In fact, the *ultras* never held much sway even at Essex or Strathclyde, and those who were bullish about the promise of a political science never embraced the excesses of American 'behaviouralism'. Less time was spent building models of the political world than in organizing public opinion surveys to better understand political socialization and voting behaviour. Money was available through the SSRC to fund big budget research; graduate students were willing to conduct interviews and fill in questionnaires; computers were increasingly available; and those in the *profession* of political science who had careers to build (but little time to write, research or think of the demands of teaching and department building) found this mode of research and this kind of science conducive to a high output of publications. Never mind the quality, feel the width.

There is no doubt that aspects of the modern political science have done much to enrich the teaching and research that occurs within politics departments. We are all now more rigorous and careful in conducting research and are a little more self-conscious and overt in the ideas and 'theories' we use to make sense of things. Moreover, the definition of the discipline as about more than constitutions and institutions had led to our having a wider view of just what politics is all about in a way that has taken us deeper into forces at work in society at large. Having said that, it must be admitted that much of what passed as modern political science (and I am thinking particularly about the mindless studies of political socialization) involved a triumph of method over substance, of

quantity over quality, where there was the over-analysis of the trivial — or at least the over-analysis of those 'facts' that could be quantified — to the detriment of a complex consideration of more problematic phenomena that eluded the reach of the sample survey. Moreover, modern political scientists in presenting their findings as scientific and value-free tended to be naive as to the promise of science and disingenuous as to the politics and partisanship caught up in their work. The irony of politics in political science was picked up and subjected to challenge, not just by philosophers of social science but by a small and growing band of politics teachers who were attentive to the critical tradition or Marxist scholarship — a tradition that had been largely ignored by those in both political studies and political science.

The New Left and Marxism

The sixties and seventies may have been a growth period for the social sciences, but one of the consequences of societal unrest and student unrest — and part and parcel of the increase in students from modest homes — was a series of attacks on the social sciences themselves. What was held up by some as objective and value-free empirical theory was ripped down by others as a mere ideology that was riddled with value-judgments, defended the status quo and served only to mystify reality. In this climate the social sciences lost a measure of self-confidence and tended to turn in on themselves. Even some mainstream social scientists felt the need to shift away from 'doing' social science (explaining their bit of social reality) in order to question the nature of the social science enterprise itself, looking to insights from the sociology of knowledge and the philosophy of social science. Two concerns stood out. First, questions were asked as to the larger social and political significance of 'objective' social science. Second, Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*²³ was discovered and attention centred on finding 'paradigms' in the social sciences and on revealing the extent to which 'normal' social science involved a closed and uncritical debate that was only opened up in moments of crisis.

The 1950s and the 1960s were certainly not a time of perceived crisis in Britain. This was the age when Britain had never had it so good. The sweet conventional wisdom within the political studies and the political science of British politics²⁴ was at one with the political mood of the times. There were few incentives to break out

into new explanatory waters — there were few incentives, that is, to challenge that covert paradigm that was integral to the conventional wisdom about the reality and functioning of British politics. Of course, there were those who talked of class struggle and the coming capitalist crisis but they failed to get much of a hearing in politics departments. Views of this kind as to the subject matter of politics and the nature of Britain were at odds with the prevailing societal consensus as to political reality and those in the discipline of politics were not prepared to provide an alternative or critical perspective on that reality because it would have led to their standing out and being vulnerable. In the age of the End of Ideology during the long post war boom years, those who voiced criticism and doubt as to the 'real' nature of things were branded as unscientific political ideologues who were out of step and so could be ignored.

In fact, there was precious little to ignore within the discipline of politics as 'compared to sociology there were relatively few Marxists in politics departments'.²⁵ Not surprisingly, therefore, what Miliband chooses to call 'class analysis' — a concern to look at government and politics historically in the larger context of social and economic forces — was not well developed amongst those whose profession was the study of politics. Instead of conferring research attention on social classes students of politics focused on interest groups; instead of attending to social class conflict students of politics denied its existence and studied harmonious group competition; instead of exploring the role of the ruling class its very existence was denied by those in the mainstream of the discipline who wrote instead about elite and party competition; instead of looking at the rich complexity of the state, students of politics chose to look at the democratically elected government and presumed that it somehow controlled the state; and instead of exploring the impact of ideology and ruling ideas in society, students of politics looked at public opinion and talked about the high levels of consensus within our stable political culture.

There is little doubt that in 1969 publication of Ralph Miliband's *The State in Capitalist Society*²⁷ was some kind of turning point. Marxism came in from the cold to assume an uneasy place in the teaching of politics at the undergraduate level. Always more popular with students than with teachers, and initially rather smugly dismissed by the modern political scientist as too general, too political and too short on hard evidence and research, the book nevertheless opened the door not just to the limitations of political studies and political science but to a different and wider conception of

politics that assigned a crucial place to what was happening in the economy at large. If modern political science made room for the political sociology courses that now dot the course structure of most departments, then the rise of the New Left and Marxism suggested that the discipline of politics should break itself down in order to take on board the insights of Marxist economists and so construct an interdisciplinary political economy.

The merit of this body of work (at least in so far as its aspirations are concerned) lies in the fact that it tries to look at constitutions, institutions, and political behaviour itself within the larger context of the forces at work in the economy and so defines the very subject matter of politics in a way that broadens out the definition offered by either political studies or political science. The problem is that there is often the simple presumption that politics can somehow be explained and 'read off' from a knowledge of Marxist theory backed up by a cursory glance at the 'realities' of economic power without the need for any concrete research into the messy stuff of politics itself. We learn little from Marxists about constitutions, public policy making, pressure groups and political parties (except in so far as they tell us that the Labour Party is quite awful) and yet these things *are* of manifest significance in political life and so need to be taken into account in the discipline of politics.

It is hard to judge the contemporary impact of Marxism on the discipline of politics. Crewe claims that 'no single political thinker is paid greater attention ... than Marx' and 'if British politics, in fact political studies generally, have become suffused, not to say suffocated, by anything in recent years it is an unthinking and simplistic application of Marxist concepts and terminology.... The truth is that in the teaching of politics Marxist political sociology has become a competing and occasionally dominating orthodoxy'.²⁸ Julius Gould would go further that Marxists and radicals have 'penetrated' and 'attacked' higher education through and through and Arblaster (who is clearly sympathetic to Marxism) has felt able to refer to 'the growing and generally salutary influence of Marxism on political and social studies'.²⁹ In so far as the study of British politics is concerned there is little doubt that for a very brief period in the 1970s the intellectual running was being made by critical and left-inspired (but not necessarily Marxist) accounts that posed an exciting challenge to the sweet complacency of the mainstream texts. Studies by sociologists forced politics students to attend to the significance of power and classes; there was a spate of European-inspired high theory on 'the capitalist state'; and there were also

some very specific and thoroughly researched studies on key aspects of British politics (be they to do with local politics, or the welfare state) that constituted a kind of radical political science.

The increasing influence of Marxism within the discipline of politics was not altogether surprising given the collapse of the social and economic conditions that sustained a particular kind of politics *and* a particular kind of disciplinary perspective on that politics. Having said that, it must be stated that Marxists have been, and still continue to be, very thin on the ground in politics departments and the Political Studies Association did not even have a specialist group on Marxism until 1983. Moreover, Marxist perspectives on British politics and the capitalist state were badly bruised by the victory of the Conservatives in 1979 and then again in 1983. Marxists have been expounding the 'need' for an 'interventionist' state in 'late' capitalism that would provide welfare and manage the economy and yet here was a government rolling back the state and attacking the very notion of state economic management — and it was doing so with the support of a large section of the British working class that had chosen to reject the increasingly socialist policies of the Labour Party at a time of high unemployment and capitalist crisis that 'should' have led to popular demands for socialist revolution.

Not surprisingly, the practical challenge of Thatcherism to key elements of contemporary Marxism had been buttressed theoretically by the rise of a New Right that in the seventies also began to make some of the intellectual running in the discipline of politics.

'Realism' and the New Right

The intellectual roots of the New Right lie in the liberal political economy of the nineteenth century. At that time capitalism was developing but a working class was being 'made' that was pressing for democracy and social change. Liberal political economy defended the market, economic freedom and liberty. It opposed the march of democracy and the drive for equality and 'collectivism' and it opposed these things precisely because the demand for public services by the state to achieve a measure of equality challenged the liberty of those who were dominant in the economic sphere so limiting the prospects for economic expansion on their terms. In more recent times the New Right came into some kind of prominence in the mid-1970s in reaction to developments in political life

that were seen as undermining the viability of the British economy to compete on the world stage.

The defeat of Edward Heath and the Conservatives in the 1974 General Election (on the issue of 'Who runs the country — the government or the trade unions?') was some kind of turning point. It did much to shatter the mainstream conventional wisdom that was integral to both political studies *and* political science. According to that wisdom, no matter whether you were a traditional political studies person focusing on institutions or a modern political scientist focusing on political behaviour and the part played by parties and pressure groups, the British political system was seen as a sweet democratic success story. The election of an 'extreme' Labour government in 1974 and the belief that the trade unions were the new lads on top whose demands inside *and* outside the political system were weakening the competitive position of British capitalism crushed the credibility of the sweet accounts of British politics that applauded the nature of democracy in Britain. Johnson in his *In Search of the Constitution* was not the only student of British politics to recognize that 'many of the traditional principles upon which British political life is supposedly based nowadays obscure more than they illuminate' as there is a 'gap between the theory and reality of British political institutions'.³⁰ So, instead of praising the British system of responsible party government students of politics came to condemn adversary party politics and provided us with an economic theory of democracy based on cynical vote-maximizing politicians; instead of seeing interest groups as enhancing of our pluralist democracy they came to be condemned as contributing to an overload of demands that was doing much to make Britain ungovernable; and instead of regarding civil servants as operating in the public interest they were seen as self-seeking bureaucrats bent on maximizing their budgets. More generally, and fundamentally, instead of seeing British democracy in sweet terms students of politics saw the 'excesses' of our system of 'mass democracy' as a sour warning to the rest of the free world because of the challenge that political institutions, political behaviour and the constitution itself were all posing to the health of the British economy. Within political institutions political parties were seen as caught up in the struggle to win elections through irresponsible auctions of popular but expensive public policies where the highest and most generous bidder wins. Once in office, however, attempting to deliver electoral promises leads to the governing party spending 'too much' before economic realities force it to rein in, break promises and effect

U-turns. All of this was seen as constituting a major *political* problem because such behaviour weakened the authority and creditability of government and the state. It was also seen as posing an *economic* problem because those businessmen who were at the helm of industry needed a stable political environment within which to plan and a modest tax burden so as to have funds to invest for growth. Outside of political institutions, trade unions were said to be demanding 'unrealistic' pay increases that squeezed employers in increasingly competitive markets, and the political behaviour of pressure groups was seen as overloading the political system in a way which forced policy concessions the costs of which inevitably fell on the wealth creating private sector so again crowding out prospects for growth in the economy. The constitution itself came to be seen as a problem because it did nothing to restrain democratic excesses and stop politicians, parties, and pressure groups from behaving in this irresponsible and economically damaging way, and it actually 'allowed' an extreme party to form a government on the basis of a minority vote in the country.

In effect, students of British politics came to see a vicious downward spiral at work between political and economic factors and so offered us a political economy of Britain that was a rival to that advanced by Marxists. Instead of focusing on the crisis of capitalism and calling for fundamental change in economic arrangements (as did as Marxists) these students chose to focus on the crisis of democracy and on the costs and consequences of democracy for capitalism. Instead of wanting to abolish capitalism, these students displayed a reform-oriented concern to improve things through political changes alone accompanied by a decline in popular expectations of government. The aim was to leave the guts of economic relationships unchanged — unchanged that is except in so far as they would be less fettered by politics and the state (because the state in doing less would be taxing less) and less challenged by the rough intrusion of trade union demands for improved pay and conditions (because trade union power would be 'curbed' by legislation). We can sensibly see this sour and critical perspective on British politics and the British economy as New Right because it is anti-state (at least in so far as the state is involved in welfare provision and economic affairs) and pro-market and so feeds into the perspective of Thatcherism at the same time as it rekindles the nineteenth century liberal fears about the dangers of mass democracy.

In a way, the Marxist and New Right analyses are in crisp opposition each to the other. The one blames capitalism, the other

blames too much democracy; the one stresses the need for fundamental economic change, the other stresses the need for political reform; the one sees a major role for the state in welfare provision and economic management, the other sees a limited role for the state; the one sees the economic market as of limited utility as a vehicle to facilitate production and distribution, the other sees the market as the crucial mechanism for making and distributing all manner of things. At the root of these differences between the two perspectives lies the fact that each camp has a radically different view as to how Britain *should* be. In so far as their analyses and descriptions are concerned, however, the strength of the one is the weakness of the other and we need to take seriously and critically both capitalism *and* democracy. Students of politics need to explore both perspectives if they are to understand and explain the full complexity of Britain's contemporary predicament.

Now, having said that the New Right perspective on British politics came to prominence in the 1970s as a rival political economy to that on offer from the Marxists it did not truly 'break' from the conventional perspective caught up in political studies and political science in the way that was the case with respect to the Marxist insights. There was no real paradigm shift, no new definition, because attention still focused on democratic politics although that politics were now *assessed* differently as constituting a problem and not as something that should be praised. The rise of the New Right within the discipline of politics may not have led to a paradigm shift within politics departments but we still have to explain why students of politics came to change their assessment of British politics and we have to indicate how teaching and research have been affected.

It is tempting and simple to suggest that change occurred because the conventional perspectives were at odds with 'the facts' as they were unfolding in the 1970s but this answer is oversimple because it treats facts as unproblematic and ignores the pressured political context within which students of politics were undertaking their work. As we moved through the 1970s it was clear that the conventional and sweet perspective on British politics was becoming politically dangerous in the eyes of those of power. First, our accounts were out of step with informed opinion as to the 'reality' of our politics and political problems. Second, in praising the established system we were seen as politically naive and damaging because we were doing nothing 'helpful' to promote the changes in institutions, politics, and expectations that were seen as needed and

vital if a 'realism' were to prevail as to what the state could sensibly do in the context of difficult economic times where the needs of the market and growth 'had' to take priority over social goals and the concern for equality. In describing British politics in sour terms and in pointing to the need for political (but not economic) changes we became part of the new and authoritative consensus in society: we fed off it and back into it confirming the truth of prevailing opinion with our science at the same time as we demonstrated our realism and relevance. This concern to be relevant and to secure ourselves in times of cuts led to the discipline wanting to have an impact on politics and policies and this has encouraged us to shape our research in particular ways at the same time as we have been eager to develop new courses for our undergraduates and graduates.

Research has come to adopt a shorter-term perspective and is increasingly designed to be 'policy relevant' and geared to the solution, or at least the understanding, of real and practical problems in contemporary Britain. In 1983, the chair of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) announced that 'Change in contemporary Britain: Context, adjustment and management' was to be the dominant theme of the Council's research work over the next five years and this was seen as involving a concern with what was wrong with Britain and what needed to be done in order to 'facilitate adaptation'. The chair of the Government and Law Committee saw change-oriented research as involving operational problems of government and how to solve them under the broad heading of 'Management, efficiency, and organization design in government'. In terms of courses for students of politics, most departments have now introduced options that deal with public policy, be they to do with policy-making, policy analysis, policy science, decision processes, public sector management, public choice, organizational analysis, or the like and these courses all tend to adopt a nitty-gritty perspective that is inattentive to any of the insights from Marxist scholarship precisely because those insights lack a relevance, a 'realism' and a concern to address and solve practical problems of the day.

My review of developments in the study of politics at the undergraduate level has highlighted how the seventies saw the rise of a modern political science (whilst traditional political studies still retained a strong foothold in most departments) and I have also documented the brief period of prominence of Marxism within the discipline and the rise and rise of the political economy of the New Right. This review does not exhaust the developments in the seven-

ties as the tail end of that decade witnessed a concern to introduce 'gender teaching' and 'gender politics', so challenging the perspectives integral to all of the above developments.

Feminism and Gender Politics

The Women's Movement in Britain did not really develop until the end of the 1960s.³¹ The broad concern was to secure 'Women's liberation' and in the early days disagreements about the nature and causes of women's subordination and oppression had not hardened into divergent perspectives on the problem. There was the optimistic belief that 'sisterhood' — an experience of oppression supposedly common to all women, black and white, rich and poor, young and old — would serve as a unifying ideology and a rallying call that would effectively unite women around common concerns. In hard reality, the notion of sisterhood served simply to mask an absence of any real unity beneath it. Women did, of course, have interests in common but they also had interests that divided them, and feminists differed sharply in their analyses of the causes of, and the cures for, their subordination. Radical feminists considered that the primary social and economic contraction in all societies was that between men and women and that women's subordination arose from male power known as 'patriarchy'. From this perspective, some kind of separatism was seen as the answer and so, not surprisingly, a radical feminism tended to link into lesbianism. Socialist feminists inclined to the view, 'It's not men, it's the system'. They did not believe in the primacy of male power, could not accept the divorce of women's oppression from all other oppressions, and tended to see the subordination of women as intimately connected to the functioning of the capitalist system. For socialist feminists change was to be secured through women cementing alliances with other exploited and oppressed groups in order to transcend capitalism and the unequal relationships that were integral to it. For their part, liberal, or bourgeois, feminists were mindful that women suffered systematic disadvantages and were denied positions of power and prestige in all walks of life, but they were of the opinion that this was not the function of either patriarchy or capitalism and so took the view that beneficial changes could come about as a result of reforming legislation making for positive discrimination and equal opportunities.

Part and parcel of all these different perspectives is the keen

awareness that women and women's issues have been hidden from history and that the subordination of women has not been taken seriously within society at large or within those disciplines that have as their objective the understanding of society. Having said that, the last decade or so has seen the proliferation of solidly researched work that has been concerned to explore the position of women in society. Central to this work has been a concern to analyze sexual divisions within society but within this broad umbrella there is work on the institution of marriage, the family, housework and unwaged domestic labour; on women's 'need' to juggle dual roles in the home and the labour market; on the unequal nature of the dual labour market for men and women; on domestic violence, rape and the power and politics caught up in private and personal situations; on the power of ideology and socialization conditioning women to accept a limited lot in later life; and on the problems of women securing leading positions in industry, trade unions, political parties, parliament, or the professions — including the profession of teaching politics in a university or polytechnic.

A recent survey of *Women in British Political Studies* argued that 'women political scientists in the United Kingdom, in common with other women pursuing academic careers, face a pattern of disadvantage which becomes "fixed" after first degree level. Although women qualify to become political scientists in proportion to their presence on undergraduate courses, they have not entered the profession in the same proportions as have equivalently qualified men. Once past the point of entry women are less likely to advance than men.'³² The British Sociological Association established an Equality of the Sexes Committee in 1974 to monitor the relative positions of men and women within the discipline and to advise the association on measures designed to help realize sexual equality, but the Political Studies Association did not get around to backing an inquiry into the status of women in political studies until after the 1978 annual conference — and then only in response to prompting by the 'Women's Group' that itself was not formed till 1977. This group is now one of the most active specialist groups in the Association with a membership, including men, of around sixty.

The discipline of politics stands accused of sexism. Students of politics may have found class analysis uncongenial but they have so far been even more reluctant to get into the issue of women's studies and gender politics. Feminist political scientists are challenging us to dramatically expand the focus of the discipline as they urge us to regard the private and the personal as political and invite us to

explore new issues (and non-issues) and new lines of political division that are outside the frame of reference of the several other strands of the discipline. Leaving aside the general male prejudice against taking women and their concerns seriously, modern political scientists prefer to leave aside something that is so obviously controversial, political and even polemical; Marxists, in their concern to make class the centre point of the analysis, have tended to ignore gender and dismiss women's liberation as a bourgeois social movement that is a deviation from the 'real' struggle; and theorists of the New Right are hostile to the aspirations of independent women precisely because they tend to subscribe to the traditional view as to what should be their proper role within the home and family.

Although by 1984, most sociology courses took account of gender in some way, 'political science was one of the last social science areas to respond to the interest in women's roles that was triggered by "second wave" feminism'³³ — and this in spite of the fact that some of the concerns raised by the women's movement to do with power and public policy are highly relevant to political science if only the discipline can twist around a little to take the new women's issues into view.³⁴

At this point in time it is difficult to assess how far women's studies have had a substantial impact on the teaching of politics. There has clearly been a considerable expansion of literature on gender politics but we have no survey that highlights the extent to which politics courses have taken women's issues fully on board. Clearly this is a challenge for the future and political scientists will have to decide whether to offer a politics input into separate and interdisciplinary women's studies courses and majors: whether to have specific weeks within established and general politics courses devoted to women and their concerns, or whether to see women's issues as relevant and political in all manner of ways so that they need to be allowed to ripple throughout all politics courses.

Conclusion: Change, Context and Critique

In my review of developments in the study of politics at the undergraduate level I have chosen to dwell on the teaching of British politics, and I have also been attentive to the larger context within which the discipline has developed. I have done this for two reasons. First, with the gradual demise of the history of political ideas tradition, the discipline of politics has become increasingly rooted in

making sense of the here and now, and the teaching of British politics is central to this and is always a key component in all undergraduate courses. Second, in order to explain developments in the discipline of politics, and in order to make sense of the expansion of focus and the changing perspectives on British politics, it is important to situate the discipline in a context which is sensitive to the impact of developing political movement and ideas (the New Left student movement, the New Right, the Women's Movement); which is sensitive to the developments of British politics itself; and which is sensitive to the implications which flow from an academic context that has enjoyed rapid expansion (though never prestige) and is now in a period of crisis and contraction.

The slow death of political studies and of a certain kind of scholasticism and the rise of a modern political science was clearly related to a phase of growth when new people came into the discipline in an easy political context and when the discipline needed to establish itself slowly by demonstrating its cool professionalism in a way which involved the illusion of a detachment from politics itself. The uneasy intrusion of Marxism into the discourse on British politics was not just related to changes in British politics but also involved a reaction to political science that had much to do with the rise of a New Left student movement of protest and the appointment of new faculty into established departments. The introduction of New Right perspectives was eased by the fact that they did not really break with established perspectives on British politics but they came to prominence in the discipline at a time of political crisis and impending university cuts. It was important for students of politics to demonstrate not detachment, but realism and an eager preparedness to be relevant in helping to solve the British crisis because this helped to secure the discipline so easing the political science crisis. Finally, the concern to get gender politics into the discipline is self-evidently tied up with the rise of a Women's Movement that has encouraged women to be more assertive in wanting to have their points of view put across in all kinds of arenas.

The politicization of just about everything has dramatically enlarged the subject matter of the discipline, although just *what* should be studied and *how* remains in dispute and there are now more paradigms around than ever. A constant in the history of the discipline, however, has been a certain tension as to what the whole enterprise should be about. On the one hand a mainstream concern has always seen it as important to join the world of ideas to the world of high political practice by being scientific and realistic and

engaging in *social engineering* for those in positions of power. On the other hand, a smaller and shifting undercurrent of opinion has seen the primary object of political education as *social criticism* where a critique of established ideas is advanced in a way that can lead to a critique of established institutions and practices with a view to effecting fundamental change for the lot of the underdogs. In the context of cuts in funding for the discipline all the pressures are on for an increasing emphasis on relevant and practical problem-solving in a way which is likely to squeeze and marginalize the more critical and sceptical side of the discipline — come back political philosophy with your large questions, all is forgiven!

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The New Politics of International Relations

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Introduction

It is extremely difficult to say anything useful in general terms about how we should teach International Relations. The obvious prior questions are, 'teach what?', 'what sort of content do we want to convey and what are our purposes in conveying it?'. To a very large extent therefore the consideration of *what* we should teach is a prerequisite to any consideration of *how* we should teach it. On that assumption this chapter will try to identify the major developments in the subject matter of International Relations, as a necessary step towards a consideration of how that subject matter should be taught in the 1990s. To do this we must observe another distinction: between the methodology (or method of enquiry) of the subject and the content of it. Again, the methodology will be a prerequisite to content, since the assumptions we make about which political phenomena are relevant will determine what we choose to include as parts of the content. And in the case of International Relations it is becoming clear that these determinants are not necessarily moving in the same direction. There has, in fact, been something of a retrenchment in the methodology of International Relations at exactly the time when we have become aware of a revolution in the subject matter itself. We are increasingly discovering ourselves to be looking at a new world through the eyes of the old. This may not, of course, be a bad thing, but it certainly highlights the importance of the subject matter of International Relations and pinpoints the moral and intellectual dilemmas that the teacher of the 1990s must face. This, we may say, is an extremely interesting — and dangerous — time to be a student of this subject.

The 1980s: The Retrenchment of Methodology

The behaviouralist revolution in International Relations has come and gone and left less trace than most of its supporters expected. At its peak, the argument over behaviouralism was quite intense. It touched the very basics of methodology. Behaviouralists such as Rosenau claimed that if International Relations did not attempt to be scientific then it was nothing. Only by observing and classifying, by testing hypotheses against observable data, could propositions be established and reasonable statements made.¹ Against this, the traditionalists, such as Hedley Bull, replied that it was in the nature of the subject that what could be treated 'scientifically' told us little that we could not observe in any case, and certainly did not address the most important facts of International Relations.² Indeed, many such writers counter-attacked the behaviouralist revolution on the grounds that its supporters simply misunderstood the real nature of scientific method. The subject had degenerated, they claimed, into 'scientism' which was a fetish rather than a method. Either scientific method was not applicable to the subject matter of International Relations, or if in principle it was, then it had to be proper scientific method, not pseudo-science. Mere data was no substitute for judgment and if hypotheses to be 'tested' were selected not because they were important but only because they *could* be tested, then the behaviouralists, it was said, were obsessed with technique above knowledge. This was not good either for science or International Relations.³

Even now, very different views are taken of the value of behaviouralism and scientific method in International Relations. As with all revolutions, it is too early to judge its effects upon the world. But it is clear that the behaviouralist revolution offered powerful critiques of traditional methodology. It failed to replace it with anything more convincing and it certainly did not destroy traditional methodology. But behaviouralism *did* reveal the implicit assumptions that traditionalists habitually made. And traditionalists were forced to articulate and consider their assumptions. The relevance of the state to the processes of international relations; the structural, as opposed to the immediate causes of conflict; the relevance of growing transnational relations; the boundaries between domestic and foreign policies were all questioned and examined from both sides of the divide with some considerable vigour.⁴

The arguments of the traditionalists may have commanded more respect within the academic community, but the debate did

not leave them unchanged. Assumptions, it was acknowledged, were an important limiting device. So the centrality of the state may have been reaffirmed in the study of the subject, and we may have agreed that the behaviour of a state cannot be adequately explained by content analysis of official statements, or by its volume of transnational contacts with other states and societies. Nevertheless, the traditionalists had to accept that it is impossible not to make some assumptions about what we are studying. And to reaffirm the centrality of the state, it was necessary to put into perspective and evaluate the relevance of such things as official statements or transnational contacts. The behaviouralist critique, therefore, may or may not have succeeded. It certainly created a tension, however, which has proved to be constructive.

How then, can we characterize the state of International Relations methodology in the late 1980s? In short, it can be described as highly pluralist. It is pluralist in that there is no expectation that one methodology is, in itself, more correct than another. And there is no realistic expectation that a holistic theory can be articulated. We have learned that all holistic theories can only exist at a level of generality which make them unhelpful or mere analogies. The power critique of Morgenthau and others posited something close to a holistic theory of behaviour in international relations. But like the 'general systems theories' of Easton or Rosecranz, or the neo-Marxist interpretation of international relations as a system of imperialism and dependence, they stand as a set of grand assumptions which are so wide that they provide no guidance when we try to apply them to a given case. Anything can be an expression of 'power' — more or less subtle in any situation. Anything can be seen as an 'input' to one sort of system at the same time that it is an 'output' of another. And everything an 'imperialist' state does in relation to a 'dependent' state — give aid, not give aid, open up trade, etc. — can be interpreted as maintaining a general system of dependence. Such theories may have their own validity and may be applicable at a certain level of generality. But the pluralism of International Relations methodology means that few students of the subject would accept them as even good attempts at a grand theory of the discipline.⁵

Pluralist methodology has also meant that there is an acceptance that it is the subject matter of international relations which must be the determinant of the most appropriate methodology to use. This does not get around the problem of assumptions: our assumptions will still be the key to deciding what we regard as

relevant subject matter. But having made that decision, we must allow the subject matter to indicate the *choice* of *methodologies*. Those words are important for we must accept that two or three methodologies applied to the same subject will illuminate different facets of a complex and ever-changing reality. Thus a realist-power critique of superpower arms control policies will focus on the structural interaction of the United States and the Soviet Union; a decision-making approach will look for different evidence, focusing on the internal debates which take place about arms control within the governments; a historical approach would set arms control in a different context and see it as a function, perhaps, of different leaderships and foreign policy 'eras'. All of these would be true, and in their own way, useful. In essence, therefore, methodological pluralism represents a healthy sort of retrenchment in the study of International Relations. It accepts the great complexity and dynamism of the subject matter and it rises above the sterility of the worst of the methodological debates of the late 1960s by putting the focus firmly on that subject matter. The traditionalists of an older academic generation seem to have kept their focus on the subject matter, but generally without questioning why that should be. Contemporary students of the subject have arrived back at that focus but in a way that has been more considered, flexible and self-aware.

The 1980s: The Revolution in the Subject Matter

The subject matter of international relations is in the process of a structural change. It is not too much to say that the twentieth century began in 1917 when the fundamental rules and processes of a new era in world politics were established. And it ended somewhere between 1968 and 1975 when those rules and processes changed. In a political sense, we have embarked upon a new era in world politics: the first decade of the twenty-first century. The beginning and ending of major wars are, of course, not without significance. They tend to accelerate social and political changes in the processes of international politics. The outbreak of war in 1914 was not marked by the sweeping away of the balance of power. Rather, it was a war to uphold it. It was the course of the war which changed the situation: the Russian revolution; the entry of the USA into European politics; the fall of four empires; the stimulation of extra-European nationalism; the onset of total warfare; the revolutions in technology and the advent of airpower. These were the sort

of developments which structured a new political era. And they continued to have profound effects on world politics before, during and after the Second World War. The Cold War was hardly a creation of the late 1940s. It had its origins well before 1939, as did the bipolar structure of post-war world politics. Or again, the post-war economic order codified at Bretton Woods in 1945 was, in some respects, remarkable. But in essence it was an organized and manageable version of the more chaotic economic system of the 1920s and 1930s. It was designed to manage the system properly and focus it around those central economic powers who had dominated the world economy — unwisely — in the pre-war period.

Accepting, then, that wars may not distinguish changed political process, what happened between 1968 and 1975 that could be said to have set the student of international relations such a challenge? In essence these years saw the culmination of a series of short and long-term changes which coincided with each other to produce a bewildering tumble of events and new political pressures.

The clearest long-term trend involved the politicization of the third world. In 1945 the newly-established United Nations reflected a world community of fifty-one states. Now there are more than 160. Of those more than 120 are third world states, and the vast majority became independent since 1960. They encompass more than three billion of the world's 4.4 billion inhabitants. And the diversity between developed and underdeveloped states has never been greater. The United States has a GDP of almost four trillion dollars, and military forces of over two million people; Britain has a GDP of 400 billion dollars, and armed forces of over 320,000 people. Belize, at the other extreme, has a GDP of 360 million dollars and armed forces numbering barely 600.⁶ In this world of such diverse political actors, almost one billion people face starvation or absolute poverty by the year 2000. With some limited exceptions, the trend across the globe, both between and within states, is that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer as we approach the year 2000.⁷ It could, of course, be said that this is always the case and that gross figures and characterizations mask real subtleties in the problem. This is undoubtedly true, but hardly the point; for the gross characterizations are precisely the vehicle on which the politicization of the third world moves. The fact remains that over two-thirds of states in the world, representing three quarters of the world's people see themselves as existing in a system of international politics which places them at a permanent disadvantage.

A second pressure is a more specific reflection of this. In the early 1970s the system of international economic management established at the Bretton Woods Conference of 1945 broke down and has not been replaced. The economic system that worked so well in the post-war era simply could not cope with the pressures put upon it from 1969–75. Fixed exchange rates broke down; partly as a result of the Vietnam war, the dollar lost its omnipotent role, and the price of gold was no longer the anchor of monetary relations. Commodity prices, which had been consistently low for over twenty years, began to fluctuate wildly. Inflation crept into the system — quite how, no-one is sure; and non-tariff protectionism began to get the better of all the tariff-cutting free trade of the 50s and 60s. Then the oil crisis hit the world economy, and four years of growing instability became, almost overnight, a crisis more momentous than the Great Crash of 1929. The oil crisis was not the cause of the breakdown, it was merely the catalyst. The system was simply failing to cope with the demands put on it by the recovery of Western Europe and Japan and the trading competition which that introduced, the strain on agricultural trade of the overproduction of food, and the increasing speed and extent of international investment.⁸ Perhaps the Bretton Woods system could never have seen out the 1970s even had there not been a dollar crisis and two oil shocks inside six years. At any rate, the system effectively ended on 15 August 1971 when President Nixon suspended the convertibility of the dollar and imposed an immediate 10 per cent import surcharge on dutiable goods entering the United States.

This system has not been replaced. Private banks now take on much of the work that central banks used to do, and politicians go to summits to discuss the details of interest rates, trade deals, joint manufacturing production, agricultural surpluses and the price of fish. Those detailed economic issues which had been managed by bankers and officials, by industrialists and economists, are now the stuff of high politics. Government must tussle for influence in a worldwide market place. Economic relations still persist with all the old intensity, but not in any coherent way. The surplus of petrodollars created by the oil crisis, for instance, led private banks in the West to lend huge amounts of money (\$900 billion by 1984) to third world countries at very high rates of interest. Governments approved, or at least acquiesced, and smaller private banks followed big private banks in what seemed to be a lucrative investment.⁹ By 1982, however, there was an international debt crisis as third world states threatened to default. The debts were rolled over for five to

eight years, storing up a second debt crisis for 1987–88. Meanwhile debt servicing for the third world — the annual payment of interest — had reached a point in 1985 where the third world paid more to the rich world in interest than it received in aid. The debt crisis is the outcome of economic incoherence and has resulted in a net annual transfer of \$32 billion from the poor to the rich.¹⁰

Technology has proved to be a third structural pressure on international relations. It reacts in different ways. On the one hand, it makes the superpowers even more super. They can command a technical sophistication in such things as aerospace, nuclear industries, telecommunication, and defence technology which puts them in a league quite by themselves. But technology also closes economic gaps. Poor countries can acquire nuclear weapons capacity and the technology to deliver them without a significant industrial base or infrastructure. Technological superiority in some narrow field — such as the production of semi-conductors in microchip technology — can narrow the gap between superpowers and others; as indeed it has between the USA and Japan as Japanese semi-conductors take over the mighty US market. And technology has done more than anything else to create intensive interdependence within the world of the OECD states, particularly the West European ones. Manufacturing production in Europe is increasingly transnational. National car companies may be 'national' in terms of ownership and management (though even this is declining) but are 'European' in their production, as components, assembly and retailing of a single car are carried out in a number of different countries. The money markets of the world are deregulated and form a continuous global transaction between developed economies. Their deregulation has been an inevitable result of technical and financial pressures which has allowed capital to be moved quickly and efficiently anywhere in the world. And though the dollar represents the economy of the most 'super' power in human history, it is just as subject to short-term fluctuations as any other currency.

A final long-term pressure may be termed as the decline of ideology in world politics. As Kenneth Clark expressed it so nicely, 'The moral and intellectual failure of Marxism has left us with no alternative to heroic materialism, and that isn't enough.'¹¹ Quite so. Marxism has failed to encompass either the capitalist Western powers or the third world, where it might have been expected to make easy gains in a post-imperial era. The 'internal threat' of Soviet Marxism — of subversion — has lost credibility and the Soviet Union presents the Western world with a conservative adversary

desperately trying to modernize; while it presents the third world with an uncertain and largely unwelcome champion, unable to translate its military aid into lasting political influence.

The capitalist world, meanwhile, is in a state of great uncertainty. The world economy is obviously not performing well for the poor countries. But it is not a zero-sum game; it is not performing well for the rich either. There is no 'unseen hand' to steady the economic tiller. The disappearance of an internal communist threat and the recognition of Soviet conservatism has taken much of the self-consciousness out of Western liberalism. It may be ironic that while Europe is more widely democratic today than ever before in its history, it is less conscious and assertive of its democratic values than at any time since 1945. The United States has ceased to offer a credible moral lead since the Vietnam war, and it seems likely that Euro-American relations are in a state of structural, and moral, change. The capitalist world is hardly in retreat, but capitalism seems now to be more a general condition of existence than a choice, still less a crusade. 'Materialism', in the phrase of Kenneth Clark, it may be; but 'heroic' it is not.

What might replace the ideology of the Cold War? One alternative has arisen in the form of militant Islam. The world of Islam accounts for almost 900 million people — over one-fifth of the world's population, and the proportion is rising. By the year 2000 Islamic peoples inside the Soviet Union will outnumber Russians and compete in numbers with Slavs inside the state¹²; and the Soviet Union has a long border with Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. Of course, 'militant Islam' does not speak for the whole Islamic world, but it has raised Islamic values to a point of great political importance. It constitutes a rejection of both capitalism and Marxism; it creates a powerful link between conflicts as disparate as Afghanistan and Lebanon; it rejects many of the norms and rules of twentieth century diplomacy. Most important of all, Islam provides an alternative vehicle for politicization of large areas of the third world. As Ali Mazrui has expressed it, the poor world has witnessed a 'changing of the guard' from Hindus to Muslims during the 1970s.¹³ It is impossible to predict what effects this may have. It seems clear, however, that the world politics which evolved from 1648 in Europe — the date which saw the end of religious wars — and which became global politics at the beginning of the twentieth century, will not in future be run on European lines. 'Global' politics of the twenty-first century will be global in the literal sense;

not simply European relations in a global arena. And it may be that we have not seen the last of religious warfare on a large scale.

These are the major structural trends that have affected international relations to usher in a genuinely new era of world politics. All of these trends, however, have only become clear because they were highlighted by a series of more immediate events which changed the political constellation in most areas of the world between 1968 and 1975. Let us turn, then, to the short-term changes in world politics.

In January 1973 the last US troops left Vietnam. American policy, both internal and external, was permanently affected by the defeat. The balance of forces in East Asia changed as a result. The Sino-Soviet dispute intensified as it revolved around the war between Communist Vietnam and Communist Kampuchea. China, one of the staunchest supporters of North Vietnam during the 1960s, invaded part of the reunified country in 1979 as a punishment for its war in Kampuchea. A mere ten years after its withdrawal, the United States was supplying Communist China with sophisticated weapons. In the absence of a general US commitment, Japan has emerged as a major economic and political force in the region. It upholds the ASEAN grouping, conducts detente with the Soviet Union, and has over 40 per cent of the import market of China, its oldest and bitterest former enemy. The end of the Vietnam war initiated a decade of rapid change which closed the story of twentieth century IndoChina and the Far East.

The 'Pacific basin' has emerged since 1972 as an area of great economic potential. The newly industrializing countries (South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, etc.) have helped to create a new economic climate in East Asia. America, too, is rapidly becoming more a Pacific than an Atlantic power. Between 1970 and 1980 the population of the USA increased by 11.4 per cent. In the north-eastern states the increase was well below this, a mere 0.2 per cent. In the mid-west it was 4 per cent. In the south and west of the country, however, it was 20 per cent and 33 per cent respectively. In a very literal sense, America is moving to the West.¹⁴ To take another example, in 1979, US trade with the Pacific rim countries was worth \$92 billion, while its trade with Western Europe was worth \$93 billion. Within four years, however, its Pacific trade had risen to \$134 billion while its West European trade had reached less than \$105 billion. During the same period, while the US maintained a favourable trade balance with Western Europe, it had suffered a \$20 billion increase in its trade deficit with Pacific countries to reach a

total deficit with them of over \$34 billion.¹⁵ US attention has, almost of necessity, moved to the Pacific.

In April 1974 a coup occurred in Portugal which changed the political map of Africa. The Portuguese colonies of Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique became independent. Angola and Mozambique became radical, Black African states. Almost overnight the bulwark of the white governments of Southern Africa was broken. The South African government had been able to count on white rule in Namibia, which it controlled; Rhodesia, which it heavily influenced; and Angola and Mozambique, which it aided. Other Black states, such as Botswana or Zambia, were simply surrounded by this constellation or else locked into it economically and logistically. By 1975, however, Rhodesia found itself surrounded by adversaries, except for South Africa to the south; and South Africa found itself embroiled in an intensifying guerrilla war on its north-eastern border, while its buffer in the north-west — Namibia — became vulnerable to radical pressures from Angola. Within less than two years the white governments found *themselves* surrounded and beleaguered by the Black 'front line' states, backed by almost universal third world support and more gradual, but ultimately more significant, Western support.

October 1973 witnessed the Middle East war. Its most obvious consequence was the occurrence of the first oil crisis. But its most important consequence was more subtle. For the war exhausted, and frightened, all the major adversaries and lessened the immediacy of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Meanwhile the realization of the power of OPEC shifted attention to the Iranian Gulf. The power of OPEC has proved to be transitory, but the shift has not. The emergence of the Shah's Iran as a major power-broker emphasized the declining ability of the USA or Western Europe to affect the politics of the region. In 1978 the Iranian revolution occurred — largely occasioned by the wealth and power of the Shah's Iran — which not only radicalized a major power in the area, but also provoked Saudi Arabia into a more conscious assumption of leadership in the whole region. The Middle East now revolves around the Gulf. The Arab-Israeli dispute is no longer a Palestinian-Zionist confrontation; rather it is an Islamic-Western struggle, centred (at present) on Lebanon. The Iraq-Iran war has become a struggle for dominance within Islam, and outside powers are helpless to do more than dabble. In 1958 the US and Britain had intervened in Lebanon and Jordan to protect the status quo. They were completely successful and largely legitimized by others' reactions. In 1983 the US and

Britain, along with Italy and France, intervened with peace-keeping forces in the Lebanon. The whole operation was muddled, it increased Western-Islamic tension, and served only to make a bad situation worse. Nothing better symbolizes the change that has taken place.

In May 1974 India exploded a nuclear device. With this, the monopoly on nuclear weapons technology which the Cold War states had enjoyed, was effectively broken. India, as one of the most respected and impressive third world states, had rejected the principles behind the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1969. The immediate consequence of this act was to trigger a regional nuclear technology race in the Indian sub-continent, as Pakistan made a determined effort to acquire the technology. More importantly, however, it made respectable the rejection of Western pleas for restraint. Since the West has not practised much self-restraint in this respect, such a rejection may not be surprising; and the rate of nuclear proliferation has not been as rapid as was predicted in 1974. Nevertheless, 1974 clearly marked the beginning of an era in which nuclear weapons will be introduced into areas of the world which are not part of the 'central nuclear balance' between the Cold War states. Israel and South Africa almost certainly already have nuclear weapons; Pakistan is in a position to conduct a nuclear test within a few months of a political decision to do so; Brazil is very near nuclear weapon status, as is Libya, Taiwan, South Korea, and some way behind them, Argentina, Iran, Iraq, Egypt and even Nigeria.

Finally, January 1973 witnessed the enlargement of the European Community from six to nine. In spite of the economic troubles of the 70s and 80s, this ushered in a period of political expansion for the European Community. It coincided with the establishment or restoration of democracy in Portugal (after the 1974 coup), Greece (after the fall of the Colonels in 1974), and Spain (after the death of Franco in November 1975). By 1986 the Community had expanded to twelve and could be regarded as almost 'complete'. It is possible that Turkey may become a member in the 1990s and perhaps Norway as well. But the Community now includes almost all but the neutrals of Europe (and even one of them in Ireland) and its membership coincides very closely with that of European NATO, and entirely with that of European OECD.

Security and economic questions have become increasingly mixed since the mid-1970s. There is a matrix of cooperation groups in European institutions such as the European Political Cooperation process, the Eurogroup, the International European Programme

Group, the Western European Union, the seven-power summit process, the Eureka programme, and so on. Such a matrix brings defence and economic issues together in a way which is quite unique in twentieth-century Europe. And the issues themselves are increasingly mixed. Technology bridges the gap. A modern economy must have an infra-structure of high technology. But research and development of such processes is extremely expensive and can hardly be sustained by a single country which is not a superpower. Moreover, the stimulus for high-tech production is predominantly in the defence field. Thus in Europe, issues of defence are also about industrial protection, technical innovation, international cooperation and — ultimately — European identity. This is a Western Europe the like of which, with all its failures, has never been seen before.

Where does this leave the superpowers? It would be foolish to deny that they will play a major role in the twenty-first century. But if the twentieth century was characterized by their emergence, and their fashioning of world politics into a structure of bipolarity which could be managed by them, the next century is very unlikely to sustain the process. Soviet-American antagonism is likely to persist, as indeed is the existence of an Eastern and a Western bloc. But the superpowers are not the managers of world politics that they were. The two blocs are in a state of (unequal) evolution. In the future the superpowers will have to struggle to control international events; indeed even to understand them. As they move into the next century both superpowers seem to be suffering from a uniquely political malady which we might call 'a hardening of the categories'.

The 1990s: Old Insights into New Problems?

Are teachers and students also destined to suffer from such a hardening of categories? They need not do so, for International Relations has always been a remarkably flexible subject. Indeed, some would say it is a parasitic subject drawing, as it does, from other subjects so freely. Martin Wight characterized it more forcefully and famously as a subject whose theory suffered from 'moral and intellectual poverty'.¹⁶ This, however, is only a problem if we worry about it. If it is indeed so parasitic it will only display the moral and intellectual poverty of those subjects from which it draws. It can hardly be more poverty-stricken than any other of the social sciences or the humanities. It is only diminished if its parasitic quality in itself is unacceptable.

For this author, at least, it clearly is not. Quite the reverse in fact. The quality of knowledge and the task of enquiry require a high degree of eclecticism. And the subject of International Relations is so appealing precisely because it values such qualities so highly. Moreover, even a sketchy outline of our transition into the twenty-first century suggests a powerful *prima facie* case for a very flexible interpretation of the relevant subject matter.

The careful student of the subject will perceive that it is possible to discern a process of international *politics*, based on the state, which is comprehensible but changing rapidly. Yet it is set within a kingdom of international *relations* which exists almost in a different dimension and is inhabited by so many other species of exotic political animal. We can discern 400–500 significant multinational companies, at least sixty of which have annual turnovers larger than the GNPs of most states. We can see somewhere between 6000 and 10,000 non-governmental international organizations; perhaps a thousand international organizations and an uncountable network of worldwide personal contacts. In a single year, for example, a country such as Britain records almost 37 million travellers crossing its official territorial borders both inwards and outwards.¹⁷ And we can see the shape and colour of the kingdom change. We may observe a growth of intensive interdependence in some areas, the development of regional groupings in others and the construction of ‘international regimes’ for the performance of certain specific tasks. We can also see that massive areas are about to be incorporated into the kingdom. Four-fifths of the earth’s surface is sea, and has never been the subject of anything more than minimal regulations. Now, however, for the first time in history, both the sea and the seabed are becoming politicized. By the year 2000 norms and conventions will have been established by governments, companies, individuals, organizations, treaties, and public tastes and fashions, which will probably govern the politics of the sea for a very long time. Even more is this true in the matter of space. In 1962 space was effectively used to a political purpose for the first time. By 1990, not only will it be added to the political kingdoms, never to be relinquished, but the *way* in which we use it will have been largely determined by a combination of factors over which there is only very limited control. These, and many other processes, are barely comprehensible to the observer, yet they are matters of great interest to the thoughtful student of international relations. And nothing less than a highly flexible approach to the subject will come anywhere near to representing an accurate picture.

How then, might it be comprehended? Even more, how can it be taught? There are any number of ways of teaching a subject. In the end it may be more a matter of temperament and intuition than deduction. Nevertheless, it is possible to offer some broad principles.

Firstly, there are two opposing pitfalls which should be avoided. The first is the notion that the essential determinants of International Politics are in some sense timeless. In this view no political system stands still and to describe change is not to invalidate the essential insights. Some writers would contend that the study of International Politics among the Greek city states or the states of Renaissance Italy, even of the theocratic empires of medieval Europe, shows how statehood can be analyzed in a context of International Relations very different from the nineteenth or twentieth century.¹⁸ Modern developments may be rapid but they are not incomprehensible and since statehood sets the boundaries of political relevance, the study of International Politics — the relations between states — remains the key to understanding the subject as a whole.

This view, however, does not do the modern state justice. For in assuming that the state sets the boundaries of relevance it makes a prior assumption that a state can be characterized as behaving in particular ways; generally that it exercises constitutional authority and/or legitimized power. These, however, are questionable assumptions and they arise partly from the division of politics subjects into certain sub-disciplines. This view tends to take at face value the simple assumptions of Comparative Politics about what defines a state. Both Comparative Politics, and this view of International Politics, seem to use the definition of a state as a convenient boundary and a prevailing paradigm. Yet as we have indicated already, the whole concept of 'state' is so diverse in the modern world that it is stretched ever more thinly across the kingdom until it is almost emptied of meaning. If the state is a single species of animal in the kingdom then at the very least it is a chameleon. As such its behaviour cannot be characterized simply. The danger of this approach, in other words, is that we mistake the *forms* for the *processes* of politics, and make assumptions so narrow as to ignore those processes which seem clearly to have a major impact on the subject.

The other pitfall, however, is to drift to the other extreme: to assume that International Relations is some type of master subject which simply has no boundaries. This view was given some theoretic-

tical justification in the early 1970s as a number of writers became interested in the possibilities of general systems theories of politics: to arrive at general theories or teleological explanations which rendered inter-disciplinary boundaries irrelevant. More recently, the view has sometimes been adopted willy-nilly for lack of anything to oppose it.

It is equally unsatisfactory, however, since it mistakes flexibility for sheer randomness. Perhaps more important for the teacher, it reduces the subject, in practice, to a current affairs approach which is unlikely to be able to build up any bodies of material of a more structural nature for the purposes of insightful comparison. This sort of International Relations would be genuinely poverty-stricken.

If such pitfalls are avoided, however, there is still a fruitful approach to the study and teaching of the subject. It is to regard International Relations as more a process than a series of forms. Worry about definitions is a sterile pursuit, and the study of forms — states, international organizations, legitimate wars — tends towards this. Rather, we should let our interest and excitement loose on those processes which reach upwards from the level of people to some of the more global abstractions which move collective groups of people. Such processes might include conflict, since the vast majority of modern 'wars' are in essence civil conflicts which straddle national boundaries. Another example of a process would be 'politicization'. The modern world witnesses the increasing politicization both of domestic economies and of international political processes. This is a response to the same demands which politicize the international politics of the seabed, unemployment, energy reserves or the computer industry. Another process could be characterized as 'rule-making', whereby all sorts of political actors establish conventions and patterns of behaviour in order to facilitate a particular function. The present literature of International Relations has already gone some way to explore this process in the development of the concept of international regimes. The process of interdependence is also well-introduced in the present state of the subject. For this, more than most current preoccupations, emphasizes the degree to which societies are systemically linked; international affairs are characterized by a high division of labour; and how there is a great measure of *institutionalization* — more powerful than most international institutions themselves — which creates a highly dynamic form of global 'order'. The importance of this sort of approach is that it ignores the division between comparative and international politics. It keeps the focus on politics, with all its dynamism and

recurrent problems. It does, of course, rely on the individual's intuition of what constitutes political behaviour or a political process. But this is preferable to a definition which relies on a form — an institution — to define something as basic to human existence as politics. And it does not ignore the state or any of the organizations and conventions which flow from that. It includes it, but does not see it as a boundary line or the chief determinant of relevance. It is not, on the other hand, a general systems approach, which requires extensive and common categorizations of human behaviour. It attempts to keep the emphasis on the subject matter. Methodology should be servant to the task, and the task is derived from an intuitive appreciation of the subject.

Conclusion

In the case of International Relations the subject could hardly be more fascinating. Processes are becoming complex and reach more extensively across different levels of political abstraction — the party, a company, another state, an international organization, a movement of public opinion — or whatever. The arena is also expanding in the twenty-first century to a bewildering extent. This bewilderment is the price we pay for the excitement. This is the best time to be studying International Relations. We have a grasp of some of the important processes of world politics. We are struggling to characterize some of the others. It is probably impossible for any individual to build up any great expertise in more than one or two of such processes. But to know one or two, and to be able to define the outlines of many others, is to know something about the subject that will not date as the world changes. It keeps one's outlook flexible, and though it makes great demands on a teacher, keeps at least this author's faith alive that there is something here well worth the teaching.

Notes

- 1 See for example, ROSENAU, J.N. (1980), *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy*, London, Frances Pinter.
- 2 For a good collection of essays which include these critiques see, KNORR, K. and ROSENAU, J.N., (Eds) (1969), *Contending Approaches to International Politics*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press.
- 3 HAAS, M. and KARIEL, H.S., (Eds) (1970), *Approaches to the Study of Political Science*, San Francisco, CA, Chandler. See also, PARKINSON,

- F., (1977) *The Philosophy of International Relations: A Study in the History of Thought*, London, Sage, pp 185–216.
- 4 See, LIEBER, R.J. (1973), *Theory and World Politics*, London, George Allen and Unwin.
 - 5 On the different ways in which systems theories have evolved, see, LITTLE, R. (1985) 'The systems approach' in SMITH, S. (Ed), *International Relations*, London, Basil Blackwell, pp 71–91.
 - 6 INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, (1986) *The Military Balance 1985–1986*, London, IISS.
 - 7 On demographic trends the best introduction is still, THE BRANDT COMMISSION, (1983), *Common Crisis*, London, Pan Books.
 - 8 See SHONFIELD, A. (Ed.) (1976), *International Economic Politics and the Western World*, London, Oxford University Press.
 - 9 LEVER, H. and HUHNE, C. (1985), *Debt and Danger: The World Financial Crisis*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books, p. 23.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
 - 11 CLARK, K. (1971) *Civilisation: A Personal View*, London, BBC and John Murray, p. 347.
 - 12 See, HALLIDAY, F. (1982), *Threat From the East?*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books, pp 50–2.
 - 13 MAZRUI, A. (1980) 'Changing the guards from Hindus to Muslims: Collective Third World security in a cultural perspective', *International Affairs*, 57, 1, Winter, pp 1–20.
 - 14 Derived from *Europa Yearbook* (1986) p. 2842.
 - 15 SLOAN, S.R. (1986), *NATO's Future: Towards a New Transatlantic Bargain*, London, Macmillan, p. 110.
 - 16 WIGHT, M., (1966) 'Why is there no international theory?' in BUTTERFIELD, H. and WIGHT, M. (Eds) *Diplomatic Investigations*, London, George Allen and Unwin, p. 20.
 - 17 CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE, (1985), *Annual Abstract of Statistics*, Tables 10.36 and 10.37, pp 215–6.
 - 18 The most eloquent examples of this are probably, BULL, H., (1977), *The Anarchical Society*, London, Macmillan; WIGHT, M., (1986) *Power Politics*, 2nd ed., Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Development in the Training of Teachers of Political Education

Alex Porter

Introduction

Teacher trainers occupy an uneasy place in the world of education-alists and academics. Not quite accepted as purveyors of worthwhile knowledge by those in academic circles. Not really counted among the ranks of those embroiled in the struggles at the frontline. It is no purpose of mine to try to change these perceptions. Nevertheless, I think it is of crucial importance that the significance of teacher training for political education — both pre-service and in-service training — should be recognized.

The recent period of growing interest in political education has corresponded almost exactly with a period of drastic cutbacks in the numbers being trained as new entrants to the profession and of severe restrictions on the funding for teachers to attend award-bearing in-service courses such as diploma and higher degree courses. In circumstances such as these it is clear that the extent and the concerns of political education teaching in schools are now likely to be heavily influenced by pre-service education and training (PRESET) specifically concerned with political education and by in-service education and training (INSET) courses devoted to this subject.

Political Education and Teacher Training

The early history of political education in schools is shrouded in obscurity. No surveys were conducted until long after political education had made its presence felt as an important feature of the school curriculum. Thus, although the most extensive survey con-

ducted in 1979/80¹ established that the greatest growth in political education courses took place in the period from 1977, there is no authoritative source of information from which to develop a picture of the earlier years of development. However, from the material available in various professional journals which concerned themselves with political education² together with the circumstantial evidence of the well-documented fortunes of social studies teaching tentative conclusions may be drawn.

It is clear that over the period from 1955 to 1970 political education gradually established itself in schools in two distinct but related forms, as the 'A' and 'O' level examination subject 'British Constitution'³ and as a typical element of social studies courses usually encountered under the heading 'Civics'. Thus, the concerns of political education in the early 1970s were almost exclusively rooted in the workings of the machinery of central and local government. For the younger age groups following civics or 'O' level courses this amounted to an outline knowledge of the main institutions and offices and what their functions in the political system are. Civics courses stressed the role and duties of the citizen in the system. At 'A' level the focus was the same but more detailed and extensive knowledge was expected, together with a familiarity with some of the current issues of the constitution (such as the desirability of proportional representation) and an introduction to either political philosophy or to the constitution of another state (usually the USA or the USSR).

In sharp contrast to the provision in schools the development and provision of PRESET in political education has been surveyed extensively⁴. The earliest survey conducted by Heater in 1966/67 found that:

there is not available a single course in any training institution for the specialist teacher of Politics. The bulk of teachers in training undertaking any detailed work in the political field are those studying History or, to a lesser extent, Geography⁵.

It is not until the survey conducted by Brennan in 1974/75 that we find examples of PRESET courses concerned specifically with political education. However, 'the majority of these were either History or Economics main methods courses during which the tutor made some mention of Politics.'⁶ And, even at this juncture, when the teaching of Politics was fairly firmly established, the survey indi-

cated that no teacher training institution offered a main teaching methods course concerned with the teaching of Politics.

It is impossible to remark on the provision of INSET courses on political education during its formative years. General surveys of INSET courses⁷ would suggest that the topic was almost entirely ignored. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the activities of the Association for Education in Citizenship, albeit in rapid decline in the 1950s, and the undoubted interest among many historians in developing their subject as a vehicle for political education would have stimulated some proportion of INSET being directed towards this topic. Nevertheless, in a period in which INSET was not very plentiful and when proportionately few teachers were inclined or encouraged to attend, such courses as there were would have reached only a tiny audience.

The picture which begins to emerge, admittedly with very little to substantiate it or to fill out important details, is one of near total neglect of training in the techniques of political education at a time when it was beginning to make significant inroads into the timetable. What then, it is interesting to speculate, were the main influences on the approach to political education adopted by those involved in pioneering the subject during the 1950s and 1960s? Without a formal training it seems likely that the main influences must have included their experiences of schooling and the approaches they admired in their own teachers, their experiences as college or university students and their training, if any, in a main curriculum subject, most commonly History. Confirmation that these were indeed the strongest influences may come from the evidence of the teaching techniques most commonly employed by teachers of Politics⁸, for the majority of teachers had a repertoire of only four methods, dictating notes, providing pupils with duplicated notes, setting written work from a textbook and illustrating these three tasks with anecdotal accounts of political events. Each of these was geared to just one end, imparting a body of fact which, in most cases, it was intended that pupils should recall fully and accurately in a written examination.

Political Education and INSET

The rising fortunes of political education began in 1969 with the founding of the Politics Association, a professional association for teachers of Politics. Despite its relatively small membership it suc-

ceeded in making its presence felt on the educational scene by a combination of well-placed influential members and pressure group techniques. In the period 1968 to 1974 entries to 'O' and 'A' level Politics examinations rose from 12,000 to over 14,000 despite the impact of extensive syllabus revisions which made the subject far more demanding for both teachers and pupils.

This developing interest in political education together with the requirements of the new syllabuses produced a remarkable increase in the INSET provision for political education⁹. The majority of the courses offered in the period 1969 to 1974 were organized either by subject teachers' associations or by extra-mural departments of universities (and occasionally by both in collaboration). The pattern of these courses was, with few exceptions, invariably the same.

Clearly the main intention of each course was that participants should, by the end of the course, acquire useful knowledge. Such knowledge fell into three categories, knowledge of politics (or of Politics — the distinction between the phenomena and the disciplined study of the phenomena does not appear to be significant in this context), knowledge of the expectations of examiners (mostly 'A' level) of Politics and, to a lesser extent, knowledge of teaching resources. This last aspect rarely involved anything other than static displays of text and topic books for participants to browse through. The other two categories were usually catered for by means of plenary lectures from recognized authorities in the field of Politics — politicians and other public officials, academics and researchers, authors and journalists, and chief examiners.

Thus, the typical INSET course concerned with teaching Politics would comprise a series of sessions featuring lectures lasting about forty to sixty minutes followed by a brief period of questions from members of the audience, the whole event being formally introduced and regulated throughout by a chairman. A small variation on this would be to feature a panel of speakers, possibly representing different political perspectives or different examination syllabuses. Such sessions typically give greater prominence to audience questions and discussion between panel members. From time to time some INSET courses took on the semblance of a parody of the above pattern, especially if arranged in conjunction with the annual conference of a subject association or if intended to be the 'shop window' for a polytechnic or university Politics department to impress teachers and stimulate undergraduate applications.

In such circumstances speakers would be chosen more for their status in political and academic circles than for their understanding

of the needs of teachers of Politics. The formalities of procedure and even of mundane matters such as etiquette at meals would be rigorously observed. The emphasis would be on the form rather than the content.

Just as the increase in the number of INSET courses for teachers of Politics was no doubt associated with both the spread of the subject and the demands created by syllabus revision, so the stimulus to change the pattern of in-service education courses for teachers (INSET) came from changing perceptions of political education.

The turning point and the agent of change was the Programme for Political Education funded by the Nuffield Foundation and the Schools Council from 1974 to 1977. This project set out to move the emphasis of political education away from a university-influenced examination subject narrowly concerned with state-centred and constitutional affairs. Political education, the project proposed, should be available to all pupils in school either explicitly in the form of courses or modules concerned with politics, or infused through other curriculum areas such as geography, English and history. The concept of 'politics' to be portrayed by course concerns and to be presented to pupils should be much wider than the traditional state-centred view; it should be characterized by social relationships and processes involving the differential distribution of resources rather than by a catalogue of formal offices and organizations. The focus should be on the causes and nature of political issues rather than on the structure and workings of political institutions.

More significantly, the proposals of the Programme for Political Education shifted the stress away from the transmission of knowledge towards the development of skills and attitudes. The aim of political education should be to develop 'political literacy ... a compound of knowledge, skills and attitudes, to be developed together, each one conditioning the other two'.¹⁰ Instead of simply offering a preparation for higher education for a small academic elite this view of political education has at its core a social and political objective, that of preparing a citizenry for an active and committed role in a participatory democracy. Thus the aims of political literacy involve obtaining, analyzing and evaluating information and evidence about political conflicts, encouraging a 'proclivity to action' and fostering those attitudes and values which would underwrite a participatory vision of democracy¹¹.

Given these kinds of concerns a much wider array of perspectives and teaching methods are demanded than the stock in trade of

the teacher of British Constitution. The subject matter of a course based on political literacy objectives must draw from a broad range of subject disciplines: economics, sociology and media studies, as well as history and geography. More significant still than the extent of subject matter is the fact that it is not sufficient for teachers simply to glean, organize and disperse information: indeed, even if by means of dictated and duplicated notes teachers could cover their syllabuses, the emphasis on skills and values renders that task almost irrelevant. To set out to develop information-handling abilities and skills of political expression and action, and to foster critical faculties and empathetic understanding necessitates a fundamentally different pedagogy.

There was, initially, a tendency for INSET course organizers to assume that the needs of teachers of political education could still be met by a series of lectures from the 'experts' in political education on how to teach to the aims of political literacy. However, the poverty of this style of INSET was discerned by the teachers and eventually appreciated by the 'experts'. The stimulus and example to modify the style of INSET courses for political education probably came from those who were more concerned with values education, many of whom found encouragement in the political literacy proposals and reflected the aims of political literacy in their own curriculum development enterprises. I have in mind particularly the World Studies, Peace Studies, Anti-Racist and Active Tutorial Work movements in the late 1970s, all of which approached their dissemination and consciousness-raising efforts in broadly similar ways. The distinguishing feature was that they set out to provide experiences, on INSET courses, which were intended to influence teachers' attitudes rather than present them with new knowledge. Political education shared similar ideals, both pedagogical and ideological, and a similar approach to INSET activities inevitably emerged¹².

Two imperatives or motivations began to shape the pattern of INSET provision for political education, the practical and the political. The practical imperative is illustrated by the paradox of arranging lectures on 'how to teach political literacy'. Like, say, swimming, political literacy is essentially and fundamentally a participatory concept and both demand the demonstration and the experience of engagement with practice.

The political imperative is less tangible. Educationalists have long accepted the significance of the hidden curriculum of schooling, those norms, values and beliefs transmitted by the underlying structure of meaning in both the formal content as well as the social

relations of school and classroom life. Sociologists and political theorists have been acutely aware that the overt intentions of the curriculum may be obscured and nullified by the contradictory messages of the hidden curriculum. Yet we have been slow to appreciate that this would apply with equal force to the curriculum of INSET courses. Lectures from experts to a passive audience are likely to signify a form of political education which is appropriate to a hierarchical political system in which the populace is passive and deferential to experts. An INSET course concerned with political education which is intended for a participatory democracy ought to feature the kind of procedures which reflect and embrace the values of such a democracy. Thus, it was realized by many of those involved in providing INSET for political education that, in their arrangements and procedures, the courses should as far as possible seek to exemplify that which they sought to explicate.

Broadly, three kinds of changes may be distinguished although each is but a facet of one basic shift of emphasis, a move away from viewing the outside expert as the instigator of change to placing the teachers/participants in the position of consultants and collaborators in a process of self-help. Thus, teachers are more frequently given the role of session leaders and opportunities are often provided for participants to share their own experiences and opinions with one another. Secondly, and as an extension of this, there are sessions in which teaching schemes and resources are reviewed and revised, or even devised. This may well involve opportunities to engage in and develop activities, exercises, games, and so on which are intended for trial in the classroom. Consequently, the content of such courses has little to do with predetermined packages of knowledge and is much more concerned with an open-ended range of experiences. The message is, hopefully, that political educators should be less concerned with 'product' (i.e., what facts should we teach?) than with 'process' (i.e., what activities and experiences should we provide?).

Pre-Service Training

There have been parallel developments in the field of pre-service training for political education. Here, however, the context is very different. The number of PRESET courses devoted to political education is small and, following a brief period of expansion, has declined in recent years¹³. More importantly, PRESET courses are

institutionalized and develop their form and style in relation to institutional constraints and on-going experience. INSET courses, on the other hand, are (or have the capacity to be) more like experiments with the benefit or burdens of histories or legacies.

Although the traditional pattern of PRESET provision in general is more innovative than that of INSET, with less emphasis on formal lectures and more incidence of practical and school-based work, it is still characterized by a process whereby wisdom is handed down from experts to novices. Thus, the hidden curriculum of teacher training has social and political implications which contrast with those of political literacy¹⁴. It is difficult for PRESET courses to move very far away from the traditional pattern of teacher training given the roles in which tutors and students are cast by the institutional and wider educational and social contexts. Nevertheless, there have been some enterprising, albeit limited, attempts in the last few years.

Only one of these experiments has been well documented. Harber and Meighan at the University of Birmingham have sought over a number of years to develop democratic practices within their teacher training programme¹⁵. Their approach is rooted in a critical analysis of educational ideologies in teacher training which locates various styles of training along a spectrum of political ideologies. At the 'authoritarian' extreme:

... the tutor is the expert: he or she is a person with considerable experience and knowledge and hence knows that there is an essential core of information that the students must have if they are to become qualified teachers. In lectures/seminars/tutorials then the subject matter is decided by the tutor, information is provided by the tutor and students are encouraged to respond to a greater or lesser degree¹⁶.

Their typography then moves through 'consultative' and 'individualized' styles to, at the democratic end of the spectrum, the 'cooperative' style which is identified as the only approach which offers sufficient scope for expressing and developing fully the skills and values associated with political literacy.

Given that a fundamental democratic ideal or objective is participation in choices between alternatives, Harber and Meighan argue that a cooperative style should not be imposed on students and that it is essential that they should be afforded the opportunity to choose between alternative approaches. Social and Political Studies students

at Birmingham are initially exposed to a tutor-directed style before they are invited to consider alternative ways in which the course should be organized, including the possibility of forming a 'democratic learning cooperative'. The students are given the following example of a democratic learning contract which, if this is the approach they opt for, they may adopt, reject or adapt:

Democratic Learning Cooperative

Possible principles of procedure:

- a) that we adopt a self-conscious research approach to our own teaching/learning situation;
- b) that we seek to examine and practice in our teaching/learning different strategies and roles; for example inquiry/discovery strategy, neutral chairperson, etc.;
- c) that while the focus of much of our work will be individual, we should share our own work with the group, for our mutual benefit; and
- d) that we should therefore accept responsibility for the work *as a group*;
- e) within that group-responsibility we should seek to understand through mutual self-criticism;
- f) that we see our primary aim as being competent, not right;
- g) that the tutors should be seen as resources for the group, and that seminars on their 'instructional input' should be chaired by members of the group in turn;
- h) that the group should decide which speaker to invite to address it and/or which films/tapes it wants to hire, or how else it will spend its time;
- i) this 'contract' should be reviewed at the end of each term;
- j) each course member (including the tutors) will undertake to write a short evaluation of the group's work to be circulated to each member at the end of each term;
- k) that we use the experience of previous courses as a source of ideas for course content;
- l) that a group logbook be kept of work completed, planning decisions and session papers;
- m) that each session shall have a chairperson, a secretary and a contributor(s) or leader(s) or organizer(s)¹⁷.

From their experience of inviting students to choose the learning style they wish to prevail Harber and Meighan claim that 'It is

only in a course based on the democratic notion of choice that an important procedural value of political literacy — freedom to choose between political alternatives — has real meaning'. They go on to remark that:

The debate engendered by the initial offer of a choice of learning method also seems to have an effect in enhancing awareness of two other values of political literacy — 'willingness to be open to the possibility of changing one's attitudes and values in the light of evidence' and 'tolerance of a diversity of ideas, beliefs, values and interests'.¹⁸

Thus there are strong indications in their account that there is, in this approach to PRESET for political education, a close correspondence between the values which underpin the course and those values which the tutors hope will be embraced and expressed by their students in the classroom.

Whereas the context and approach is quite different the same observation would hold for the training of teachers of Politics at the University of London Institute of Education. Although choice of course organization is also offered to students, this opportunity is not structured or formalized to the same extent as on the Birmingham course. The principal concern has been to achieve a congruence between the tutor's assumptions about the pedagogy of political education and his own teaching strategies and methods used on the course¹⁹. There is an emphasis on student-directed activities, on small-group work and on procedures that rehearse and portray various teaching strategies which set out to offer experiences of participation, decision making, cooperation, toleration, and other aspects of political literacy. Thus, whilst the students may be less conscious of their opportunities for choice than their counterparts in Birmingham, this should be offset by the opportunities afforded to them during the course to encounter and reflect on a teaching strategy which seeks to respect, encourage and augment their own needs, experiences, opinions and abilities to provide input and direction for the course.

Future Prospects

We should be wary of claiming too much for what are clearly, in the total context of the provision of INSET and PRESET courses, very limited initiatives and it is important to be ever mindful of the

contemporary educational and political context in which they operate. As with perhaps every educational development, there are hindrances and counterpressures. It seems that for most of the history of educational advance, in the humanities and natural sciences alike, there have been events and initiatives which have had the effect of stemming the momentum or deflecting the direction of that advance, and the history of political education is no exception.

In 1985 the DES published a blueprint for the future funding of INSET²⁰. It is hard to make any confident predictions about the implications of this document, indeed it is proving to be particularly difficult for local education authorities and teacher trainers to unravel. However, at least two prospects may be anticipated, one of course being a dwindling of funds allocated to INSET. The other prospect appears to be more attention on INSET courses being given to those issues which regional committees, largely made up of LEA representatives and teacher trainers, and ultimately the DES, consider to be important, and less attention to the expressed needs of teachers.

Formerly the teachers had a powerful 'voice' in the provision of INSET in as much as the market mechanism meant that courses would not run if teachers did not confirm their interest by applying. Courses would not even be contemplated if there was doubt about the interest of teachers in the topic for fear of wasted effort and expenditure. Under the emerging structure the fairly cumbersome machinery will probably mean that course organizers will be less able to respond to and reflect the needs of the 'market'. At the same time, the machinery will generate pressures which will prompt teachers to attend INSET courses almost regardless of whether the courses match their expressed needs. The chances of much attention being given to political education in these circumstances will, I believe, be slim. Even if I am mistaken, there are yet other factors which do not augur well for the kind of provision which would be made.

The effects of a greater degree of involvement by LEA administrators in the actual process of education are not difficult to predict; much has been written about this in the United States where the powers of government agencies and of school boards are relatively greater than in the UK. Atkin, for example, when discussing the effect of federal and state funding of curriculum evaluation demonstrates that administrators, by virtue of their background and training in management and government, expect and often demand that research and development work funded at their discretion should

conform to patterns which they regard as valid and worthwhile²¹. A similar kind of pressure from LEA administrators in the current development of INSET would undoubtedly lead to a greater emphasis on content, on worthwhile knowledge and on formal lectures from experts rather than experience-based courses. Political education, if it featured in any recognizable form, would be forced, for these and other reasons set out below, back into the mould of civics education.

Similar trends may be discerned in PRESET. Progressively, since about 1982 the DES has exercised more of its latent powers to control the provision and content of PRESET. The number of students training in each of the main curriculum subjects is closely monitored, targets are set and financial disincentives are used to try to ensure that nationally the figures do not stray too far from the specified quotas. The effect has been that in some polytechnic and university departments of education whole subject departments have been closed down and that the scope for providing even optional courses in political education has been severely eroded.

More recently guidelines on the nature of the curriculum for PRESET have been issued by the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) and HMI have, on behalf of the DES, undertaken the task of inspecting departments of education in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education and individual PRESET courses as part of the process of accreditation. It is much too soon to be able to form an impression of what the outcome is likely to be. Nevertheless, given the general slant of the guidelines which have been issued and the political climate in which they originated, we may anticipate a process of what undoubtedly will be termed 'rationalization'. That is to say there will be pressure to reduce — in the words of the Secretary of State for Education and Science — 'the clutter', to give greater resources to what are claimed to be the basics of education such as mathematics and English and to what are held out to be our hope for economic salvation in a technological age, sciences and computer studies. In such circumstances the scope for PRESET courses in political education is likely to be reduced even further and, where they survive, the pressures to adhere to a prespecified and largely content-based schedule will be considerable.

All of this merely reflects the pressures which have been manifest in schools for some time. In the present and persistent climate of economic decline there are two dominant processes at work. One is simply that of making financial savings often regardless of what is sacrificed. However, with a differential curriculum in which some

things are considered to be basic and others as 'clutter', the most vulnerable areas must be the humanities and the social sciences. The other process is the attempt by governments to implement changes designed to reassure the electorate that something is being done to alleviate the economic decline. By and large the teaching of humanities and social sciences does not readily lend itself to an image of economic renewal and technological progress. Thus, while all the stress is on various initiatives in 'vocational education', and while the Manpower Services Commission has the financial clout to redefine education as training, it is less likely that many headteachers, parents or pupils will place political education high on their list of priorities.

Unfortunately all these pressures have their impact on the individual classroom teacher. The contemporary culture of educational change, those norms, values and beliefs which exert a powerful influence on the view which teachers of political education hold and express and on all the decisions which they make, discourages them from advocating and implementing the participatory-democratic objectives of political education. It is not fashionable to express such views, it does nothing to enhance one's career prospects and, in some contexts, it could actually have harmful repercussions. Political education is now, more than ever, a 'low status, high risk' area of the curriculum.

Is there any way out of this slough of despond, other than by good fortune or economic and political miracles? If there is then I would suggest that one of the ingredients of a solution has to be teacher training. Assuming that one objective is to change attitudes, within the profession, to the concept of education, to the status of the humanities subjects and to social and political education in particular then this is more likely to be achieved through INSET and PRESET. And if attitudes are to be affected it is necessary to deploy teaching and learning strategies on courses which set out to change attitudes rather than merely seeking to transmit knowledge; to emulate and build on those strategies described above.

Notes

- 1 STRADLING, R., and NOCTOR, M. (1982) *The Provision of Political Education in Schools: A National Survey*, London, Curriculum Review Unit. This survey, funded by the Department of Education and Science, investigated the provision of political education in all local

- education authorities in England and Wales and studied the curriculum provision in a structured sample of 10 per cent of all middle and secondary schools and colleges of further education.
- 2 The *Newsletter* of the Politics Association, its journal *Teaching Politics* and termly bulletin *Grassroots*, together with the journal of The Association for the Teaching of the Social Sciences *Social Science Teacher*, provide the main forum for the concerns of teachers of political education. Other journals and bulletins from subject teaching associations such as the General Studies Association, the Association for Liberal Education and the National Association for Teachers of English have also published material giving an insight into the early provision of political education.
- 3 By 1970 there were about 12,600 entries nationally to this subject at 'O' and 'A' level.
- 4 HEATER, D.B. (1969) 'Teacher training' in HEATER, D.B. (Ed.) *The Teaching of Politics*, London, Methuen, pp 126-44; BRENNAN, T., (1978) 'Political education and teacher training,' in CRICK, B. and PORTER, A. (Eds) *Political Education and Political Literacy*, London, Longman, pp 188-95; ROBINS, L. and KIDD, A. (1978) 'Politics teachers: Initial training and employment in 1975-76', *Teaching Politics*, 7, 1, pp 23-6; PORTER, A. and NOCTOR, M. (1981) 'Political education and the initial training of teachers' in *Teaching Politics*, 10, 3, pp 243-58.
- 5 HEATER, D.B. (1969) *op cit.*, p. 138.
- 6 PORTER, A. and NOCTOR, M. (1981) *op cit.* p. 245. The authors reanalyze and comment on Brennan's data (BRENNAN, T. (1978) *op cit.*).
- 7 CANE, B. (1969) *In-Service Training: A Study of Teachers' Views and Preferences*, Windsor, NFER; DES (1970) *Survey of In-Service Training for Teachers 1967*, London, HMSO.
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- 9 PORTER, A. (1982b) *In-Service Training in Political Education*, unpublished report of the Curriculum Review Unit, London, submitted to the DES.
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